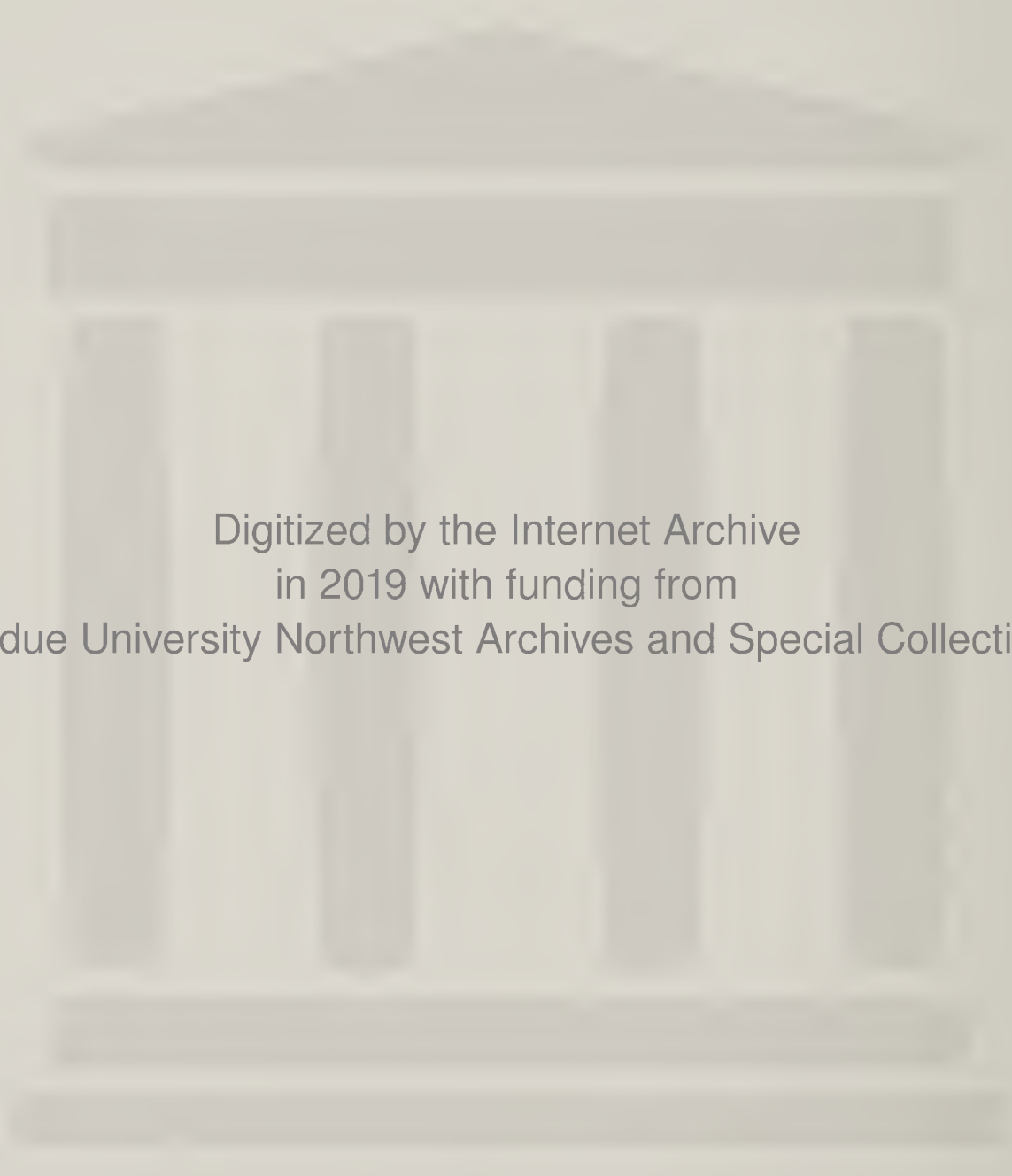


Portals

A Literary Journal



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Portals

A Literary Journal

Purdue University
North Central
2002

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Preface

Every year, at about this time, I invariably find some common thread connecting the essays, poems, and stories that PNC students have written for these pages. This common thread often points to how we see ourselves and how we organize this world in order to make sense of it. This time, the thread is time. So I've organized this journal according to the past and present.

Interestingly, a quiet debate occurs between these pages: some students suggest that times change the way we see the world (for example, in "Alternative Education" and "Life before Cable TV") while others suggest the opposite, that history keeps repeating itself (for example, in "Soccer Mom Unabridged," "To Great Heights," and "The Matrix"). Another debate between external and internal determinants organizes itself around the way we come to be. On one hand, past events determine who we are in the present (for example, in "High School Diploma" and "Climbing Tahoma"). On the other hand, we are, in the present, the sum of our past decisions (for example, in "The Goldfish" and "Silence and Room 142"). In all these quiet debates, the writers suggest that time organizes who we are and how we see ourselves in the present. I am reminded of the words of the fictional J. Alfred Prufrock who unknowingly argues that we really never have enough time:

"There will be time, there will be time / To prepare a face to meet the
faces that you meet; / There will be time to murder and create, / And
time for all the works and days of hands / And time yet for a
hundred indecisions, / And for a hundred visions and revisions, / Before
the taking of a toast and tea." (T.S. Eliot, "The Love Song of J. Alfred
Prufrock," ll. 26-34)

I will also take time to thank the judges who have devoted their hours to help make *Portals 2002* possible. Without their time and patience, this journal would not be possible. Thanks go to my colleagues in the English and Education Departments: Lee Block, Pat Buckler, Ann Carver, Jesse Cohn, Lesa Cotto, Guillermo Gregorio, Teresa Henning, Dorie Huber, Robin Hursey, Robert Mellin, Jane Rose, and Tom Young. Thanks also go to the student judges: William Adkins, Scott Bayer, Michelle Boardman, Kim Hayes, Tim Jones, Jessica Rud, and James Terhune.

I am also indebted to Tessa Anderson, Carissa Dickerhoff, Kashawnta Evans, student employees, and Darlene Nelson in the Letters and Languages Section, and Carol Connelly and Karen Prescott of Campus Relations for their equally valuable time. Finally, I also appreciate Chancellor James Dworkin's financial support.

Susan Hillabold

Director of the Writing Contest and Editor of *Portals*



Karen Marks

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The Past

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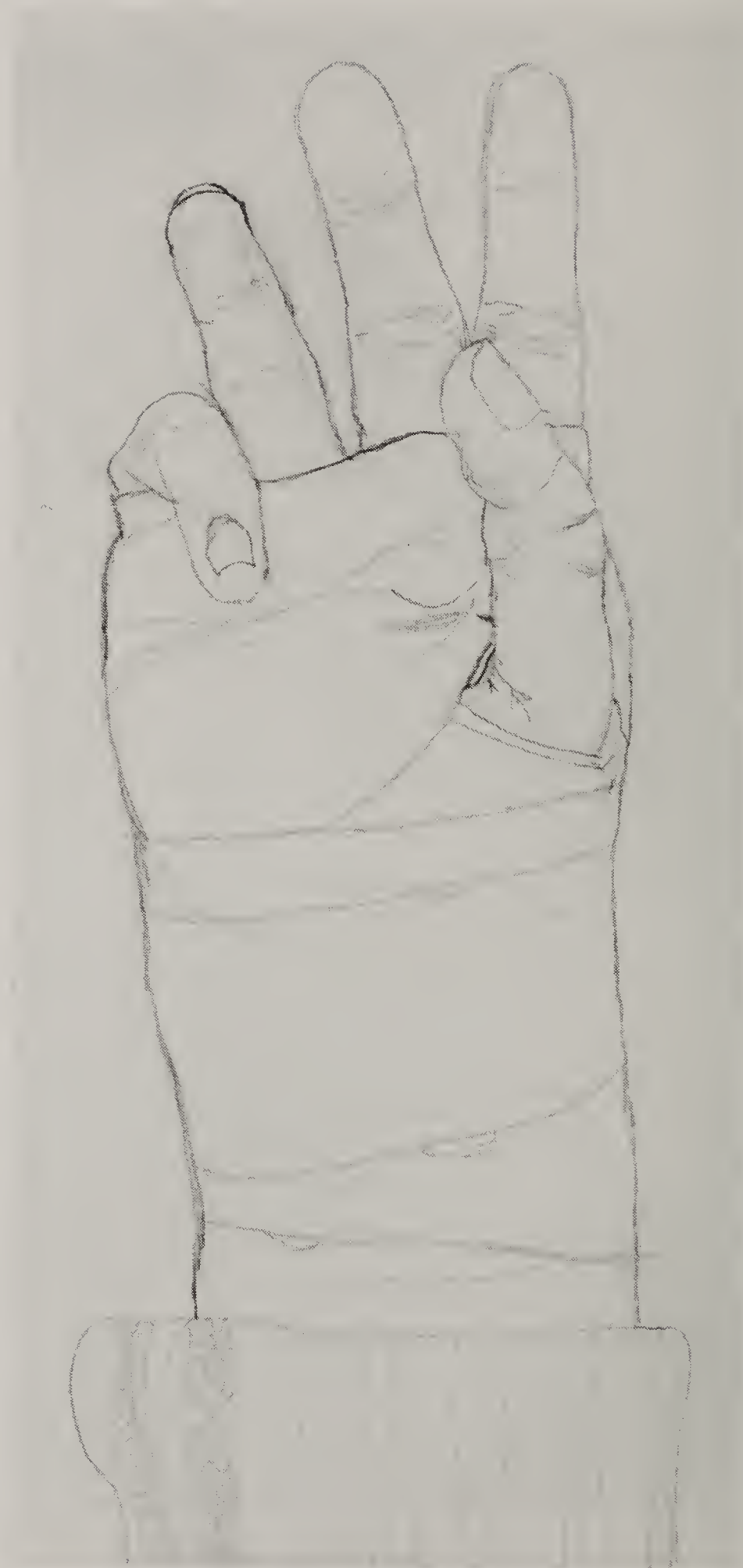
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Kristi Brosmer

Dave White



Heather Boklund

Scott Linnell
The Reveries of Youth

"So, are we going fishing today?" Alicia asked in an eager voice.

"Yeah, looks that way" I replied while picking up two poles. "Think you'll catch the biggest?"

"I don't care, as long as we have fun." Her face was full of love and happiness as her hair shone in the sunlight like glowing embers from a fire.

I laughed to myself as we made our way to the pond. "Have you ever been fishing before?"

"Nope, but that doesn't matter. We'll have fun even if we don't catch anything."

I couldn't help but smile. "How do you know we'll have fun if you've never been fishing before?" I was always challenging her.

"There's gotta be more to fishing than catching fish," she said, furrowing her brow as though she were lost in some deep thought.

"How do you know that?" I asked as I lifted her up and then set her on the ground underneath the shade of a tree.

"Because I can imagine what it's like," she said, smiling happily.

"Then what are the chances I can get you to put this worm on your hook?" I asked squatting in front of her, holding out the worm in question.

In a tiny burst of her little laughter, she tried to squirm away from the worm, replying, "I dunno, how big is your imagination?"

It was summer; I do not remember the year. I was between seven and ten years old, and Alicia was between five and seven years old. Alicia was always putting life into perspective, always thinking things through, even though she was younger than I. She was unique. She never seemed to let anything bother her, no matter what happened. Whereas most children her age would throw fits if things didn't go their way, Alicia seemed to be at ease with everything. She didn't care if she was not the first kid picked for a game at recess. She just wanted to be picked. She didn't care if she did not score the most points or did not make the winning basket. She just wanted to be in the game. She didn't care if she was not the prettiest girl in school. She just wanted to be in school.

She didn't care if she did not have the most or the cutest boyfriends. She just wanted someone to talk to her. She didn't care if she was not the fastest swimmer or could not hold her breath the longest underwater. She just wanted to be in the pool. She didn't care if nothing went her way or if everything happened for a reason. She just wanted to dream. You see, Alicia was born with one of those unpronounceable conditions that left her in a wheelchair.

Each summer, I volunteered at a camp for handicapped children. I met Alicia the first day I was there, and we were inseparable for the two weeks of camp each summer. I can still see her now with her bright orange hair and thick glasses that overtook her tiny face. She had the kind of face you could never say "no" to. Her legs were small, very small, due to the way she was born. She wasn't able to walk really. Sometimes she would wear menacing encumbrances of braces, and with the aid of crutches, she would "walk" the best anyone could in her condition. But being able to walk didn't matter much to her. She would always tell me, "I can see the world just fine from my wheelchair, without having to worry about falling." She was special.

We were always breaking away from the group and doing our own things. She always wanted to try new things or go on new adventures. She was afraid of nothing. She knew how to dream. It didn't matter how simple or normal our adventures were. Vivid imagery would filter through her thoughts like unforgotten wishes from the bottom of a well. Countless hours would be spent "exploring" a familiar field on an epic journey to retrieve priceless objects, even if they looked like tennis balls to me. Subtle whispers of enchanted lore would fill our days and conversations. She had an imagination. She was always having fun, no matter what we were doing. Everything was an adventure waiting to happen, and we were always in the middle of it. She seemed to spend her life inside a dream, and it was wonderful.

She told me once that she was going to die. She just didn't know when. She wasn't even expected to live as long as she had. She was exceptional. I asked her what it felt like. She told me she didn't know because she was too preoccupied with life to have ever really thought of death. "I know I'm going to die one day, but doesn't everybody? So what's the use with worrying about it? I just want to live before it happens. I want to have fun," she said, with her face beaming brightly. She had a maelstrom of problematic repercussions to worry about with her condition, but they never seemed to bother her. She was so happy and full of life that it made me wonder all the time. Why are people

discontent with the way they are? Why can't they just close their eyes and dream like Alicia? Everywhere we looked we would see people who were more fortunate than she, but Alicia always seemed more elated than they could ever be. She knew how to live.

I learned many things from her, even if in the moment I did not realize it. She was contagious. Alicia never knew it, but she was teaching me things that I would hold dear for the rest of my life. Most of them cannot even be put into words: things that are just understood, things one can't really put his finger on. She was like that, full of life, love and questions with no real answers. I admired her then and still do now. Everyone should have his own "Alicia" touch his life at least once, even if briefly. Everyone should hold the shared moment as though it were some piece of forgotten lore, reborn into this child of dreams, and never let it go. She was truly beautiful. Because of her I learned how to dream and not to worry if anything went my way. There are always dreams and always will be. She taught me how to live. Not how to breathe and stay alive to sustain existence, but how really to live through dreams and abandoning worry. She made me aware of the beauty of life. It wasn't until later I realized the gravity of what I started to learn from her. I am still learning. As I reflect, I see that she was the only person who was truly "alive"; everyone else was a breath short of life. Even though she was so young, she knew the meaning of life: to dream.

We never wrote each other; we would just see one another every summer at the camp and live our lives separate during the rest of the year. We were too young to worry about things like that and too busy dreaming. One year she wasn't at camp. I never found out why. It was the last time I volunteered because I moved the next year. Sometimes I wonder what happened to her. Did she ever graduate from high school? Did she ever get the dog she so desperately wanted? Did she have all the adventures she dreamed about? Did she ever find what she was looking for? I often think of what became of her. She is remembered. That's what matters. These questions have real answers I'm sure, but they don't matter. She taught me to dream, not to worry too much about something I can't change. She taught me how to live. I still can't help but to wonder at times what happened to her. That is when her soft voice echoes through the years

..."I dunno. How big is your imagination?"...

Jeff Burton
Captured Memories

For the last 25 years, I have been on a mission to locate all of the information, pictures, and memorabilia associated with my Dad's boxing career, in hopes of building a shrine in my house to honor the memories that my Dad unknowingly left for me. After Dad's death in November 1976, I turned to my grandmother, my uncle, and my aunts for help completing this mission. Little did I know that the help I was about to receive would astonish me and at the same time make me very proud.

After the funeral, my uncle was the first person I talked to concerning Dad's boxing career. I learned that Dad had boxed Golden Gloves for three years and that he had compiled an impressive record of 67-4. Dad won the Tennessee State Championship in 1955 in the Welterweight Division. I also found out that Dad was a local celebrity and that he had been in the two local newspapers numerous times. Uncle Buford told me that they called Dad the Brown-Bomber, which was also Joe Louis' nickname. Uncle Buford told me, "in your Daddy's four losses, he was never knocked down or out; he lost close decisions, two in Memphis and two in Nashville, all four to Hispanic fighters." I remember my Dad telling me, "Those Latinos are as hard headed as I am!" I found out that Dad loved Joe Louis and Sugar Ray Robinson, but most of all he appreciated Muhammad Ali and the way he would glide around the ring like a ballet dancer. "Ali could beat you offensively or defensively," my dad would say to me when I was younger. Now I actually know that my Dad's viewpoint was a well informed reference to Ali's ring skills. My uncle also informed me that Dad had been just as good with his hands out of the ring as he was inside the ring. I know now that this was his way of breaking the news to me about Dad's personal life: "Your Dad had done a little jail time for fightin' and drinkin'," Uncle Buford stated. He said my Dad was afraid I would find out about him spending time in jail, so he never even let me know about his boxing! That didn't matter to me, though; I was still bound and determined to complete my mission at all costs.

Several months later, it was time to confront my grandmother about Dad's boxing days. I explained to her that I was interested in maybe putting together some type of collection or memorial in honor of Dad. I can still see the joy and pain on her face when she recalled those memories of Dad's younger years. She

laughed and cried while telling me some interesting stories about Daddy's boxing years. Then all of a sudden she said, "Hold on, baby, I have some old pictures you might like to have." Immediately I froze and went into a cold sweat, almost starting to cry, but I didn't. I remember hardly being able to wait for Grandma to open that old leather case that contained those pictures of my Dad. I completely lost it when she opened it. There in front of me were at least a hundred pictures of Dad boxing, training, posing, and lots more. One particular picture caught my eye instantly: my Dad was standing in the ring over an opponent that he had just knocked down. It was awesome! Also numerous newspaper articles featured my Dad. My favorite states, "New kid on the block pulls no punches in win over local favorite." The article explains how my father had just beaten a fighter who had been favored to pulverize him, but Dad pounded him in three rounds. I was totally speechless. I was so happy I could cry, and this time, I did! I was on top of the world.

I hugged my Grandma, looked at the articles, smelled them, touched them, and cradled the pictures like a newborn baby. Now, I knew I wanted to build a proper shrine in honor of my father's accomplishments in the ring. Grandma obviously knew I was in awe of this wealth of information concerning Dad's boxing days. The pictures were great; old and brittle but without a doubt exactly what I was after. Tears welled up in her beautiful brown eyes when she said, "Son, take them all; I want you to have them." I know how that must have hurt her, but she was adamant that I complete my mission.

More than ten years later after a little bit of work to put together a shrine, I went on a trip to Tennessee to meet with my two aunts, because they said they had some stuff from Dad's boxing days that I might be interested in. They had arranged for me to meet my Dad's boxing coach, Sam Wallace, at his house, which was not far from their own homes. All of them must have spoken with my Grandma, because as soon as I arrived, they met me in Sam's driveway and told me they had a surprise for me. Boy, did they! After I walked into the dining room, my Aunt Nancy covered my eyes. When I opened them, in front of me were six of the most dazzling trophies I had ever seen. One of the trophies stood at least four feet high, at the top a boxer standing with his gloves held high in the air, and on the brass plate at the base of this trophy was the inscription "1955 Tennessee State Champion Golden Gloves Welterweight Division." Sam informed me that Dad had told him for years that he would be by to pick them up, someday, but he never did. In addition to the trophies, there were more

pictures of Dad's boxing. Then, Aunt Nancy told Sam "to bring in the good stuff now that he has settled down a bit." I didn't have a clue what she meant; I couldn't imagine anything better than the trophies and pictures! Even before that thought entered my brain, Sam was back in front of me with a dusty old gym-bag. Inside the bag was a musty old pair of blue and white boxing trunks, a red pair of stale-smelling, eight-ounce boxing gloves, and a flawless-looking pair of black boots that were all worn by none other than my own father! They were a gold mine in my eyes, memories galore. Of course, I was excited, and before I could even begin to ask they offered me the articles, trophies and pictures to add to my collection. Without hesitation, I took them and headed home to relish these prized items.

As a result of starting this mission, I have collected hundreds of items relating to Dad's boxing career. Now I know I could build a shrine worthy of my Dad's career. No way do I want these memories of mine stashed away in some old box or suitcase in an attic or basement! I have a complete wall in my family room covered with the newspaper articles, and the pictures are all framed and perfectly arranged on the adjacent wall. On the fireplace mantel are the six most beautiful trophies in the world. I have a beautiful glass case that holds my most prized possessions, the flamboyant trunks, the rock-hard, red gloves and flawless, fancy, black-laced boots that my Dad wore to battle many times. When I enter my memorabilia room, I go back to a time when boxing was a battle of heart, guts, and courage. I imagine I am in a smoke-filled arena, with fans and photographers surrounding me, and I can see my Dad "floating like a butterfly and stinging like a bee!" I am grateful now that I began my mission so long ago, because nothing can compare to the memories that I have captured and I display with honor and pride in my home today!

Kristi Brosmer

Action and Responsibility: A Need for Universal Concern

"For many years now we have met Germans who declare that they are ashamed of being Germans. I have often felt tempted to answer that I am ashamed of being human."

(Hannah Arendt, "Organized Guilt and Universal Responsibility" 154)

Following World War II, Hannah Arendt used her background education in philosophy and combined it with the experience of the Holocaust to weave philosophical and political world-views in order to approach one of the greatest atrocities in history. She attempted to answer questions perplexing generations of individuals after the genocide. She deeply penetrated the philosophical thought shaping her and society's makeup of the time. Many have praised her and others have deeply criticized her for the answers she gave; but in looking at her texts and those scholars who have studied her writings, I will attempt to rectify the two opposing viewpoints and analyze the messages often missed in Arendt's writings.

To understand many of Arendt's thoughts and her themes, it is helpful to gain some insight into what impacted her writing. A Jewish woman born in Germany in 1906, Arendt dealt with many different prevailing ideologies. She was brought up in a professional, very well educated, leftist home. Her parents were religiously skeptical, but they sent her to receive an education at a synagogue (Baehr vii). Studying at the Universities of Marburg and Freiburg, she became interested in philosophy and went on to receive her doctorate in philosophy at the University of Heidelberg. At Heidelberg, she worked under Karl Jaspers, who would remain a life-long influence. Under Jaspers, she wrote her dissertation, "Concept of Love in St. Augustine" in 1929. Ideas of natality, morality, memory, and the world addressed in this piece would be constantly reevaluated, but functioned as an important framework for later thought (Baehr ix). It was 1933 that marked her fleeing from Germany to France. Upon arrival she worked for the immigration of Jewish refugee children to Palestine (Baehr xv-xvi). For her involvement and other Zionist activities, she was arrested but fled to Paris. By 1938, she began to work for the Jewish Agency in Paris. In

1941, Arendt arrived in the U.S., where she would continue to live most of her life (Baehr lv-lvi). Before writing her most famous political/philosophical tracts, she contributed various newspaper articles dealing with Zionism, statelessness, racism, imperialism, social revolution, and the establishment of a federal Palestine with equal representation of Islamic, Christian, and Jewish groups (Baehr lvi). After publishing her writing, she worked for various Jewish agencies and served as a visiting professor at many universities. In the 1950s, Arendt won several grants and fellowships and continued her research into philosophical/political thought (Baehr lvi-lvii).

Arendt's background contributed to many of the themes and ideas put forth in her writing, which is deeply skeptical of existing governments, humanism, and essentialist theories of humanity. At the same time, she wrote that all human beings deserved dignity because of their essential human characteristics. Both conservative and liberal thoughts are deeply entrenched within her works. Arendt writes as a philosopher, political scientist, social constructionist, and historian. Her tracts deal with various issues and, in combination, provide a new perspective into the mid and latter part of the twentieth century. Initially, there must be some inspection into what Arendt was writing in order to access her world-view.

Arendt discusses political philosophy using many different classical themes. One aspect she concentrates upon is the idea of freedom and/or lack thereof. In the "Perplexities of the Rights of Man," she writes of the historical status of rights. Her study concentrates on the origins and subsequent development of natural rights. Natural rights, a principle consequence of the Enlightenment, are flawed in modern times, Arendt posits. Unlike her predecessors, Arendt stresses a need not for the rights of freedom and justice as such, but instead an essential framework of protecting laws and action. This is very important considering the discussion of stateless people and its relation to the Holocaust's destruction. Applying Kantian principles to the tragedy of World War II, she develops this important concept, which also implies universal responsibility of all people:

Something much more fundamental than freedom and justice, which are rights of citizens, is at stake when belonging to the community into which one is born is no longer a matter of course and not belonging no longer a matter of choice, or when one is placed in a situation where, unless he commits a crime, his treatment by others does not depend on what he does or does not do...They are deprived, not of the right to

freedom, but of the right to action; not of the right to think whatever they please, but of the right to opinion. Privileges in some cases, injuries in most, blessings and doom are meted out to them according to accident and without any relation whatsoever to what they do, did, or may do.

(Arendt, "Perplexities..." 37)

Further examination of the rights of any stateless people is written in this analysis. The law, Arendt contends, must presuppose the abstract theoretical constructs of justice and equality. Additional historical proof is given by Arendt to uphold her hypothesis. Her theory begins with an analysis of the Jewish people, and other stateless people of the world, as a group forced to be isolated from the law itself. Much of Arendt's political philosophy is dependent on an idea of law. If one does not belong to a state, which will guarantee freedom, then how may the people be able to survive? There is always a state of limbo for those who never know how they will be treated by the existing government structure. Arendt illustrates the necessity of a Jewish state and calls for a collective solidarity of action. Law will provide the necessary means for such actions to occur. Without the law, Arendt claims, no one in the world is safe from the conditions of existence, including those deprived of national community:

The calamity of the rightless is not that they are deprived of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness, or of equality before the law and freedom of opinion—formulas which were designed to solve problems within given communities—but that they no longer belong to any community whatsoever. Their plight is not that they are not equal before the law, but that no law exists for them; not that they are oppressed but that nobody wants even to oppress them. Only in the last stage of a rather lengthy process is their right to live threatened; only if they remain perfectly "superfluous," if nobody can be found to "claim" them, may their lives be in danger. Even the Nazis started their extermination of Jews by first depriving them of all legal status (the status of second-class citizenship) and cutting them off from the world of the living by herding them into ghettos and concentration camps; and before they set the gas chambers into motion they had carefully tested the ground and found out to their satisfaction that no country would claim these people. The point is that a condition of complete rightlessness was created before the right to live was challenged. (Arendt, "Perplexities..." 36-37)

Such a claim seems to deem the necessity of action by a world community. By guaranteeing the law to only those who are part of a democratic governing system, the quality of human life is diminished. Arendt asserts that the law must afford equality to everyone as part of a universal community. The universal community and its responsibility is a central concept in much of Arendt's thought. These ideas make sense given Arendt's perspective of those who are afforded no protection by a governing body.

This leads to another premise found in Arendt's writing: the existence of totalitarianism and the universal responsibility to protect those victims of totalitarian governments. Many of Arendt's thoughts regarding totalitarianism and its origins have been raised since she published "The Origins of Totalitarianism" in 1951. Much of this criticism has occurred regarding her discussion of the banality of evil. It is necessary to understand what Arendt meant by using such terminology to discuss the most horrific event of the twentieth century. However, Arendt is making the claim that such an event, without precaution and/or external intervention, could occur anywhere. After reading through Arendt's texts, one comes to the conclusion that her thoughts are not truly as questionable as they must first seem. Arendt is trying to comprehend how an act that seems beyond comprehension could occur in a time when many people are supposed to be afforded more equality and liberty than ever before. After all, modernity has been theoretically responsible for securing many rights denied to the majority of people in other centuries.

Looking at the Holocaust from a historical/sociological perspective, Arendt finds it difficult to see that the people involved were purely evil. Instead, after careful examination, she seems to conclude the event was planned and acted out by thoughtless bureaucrats, many of whom simply saw themselves as carrying out orders. Being that she demands responsibility, she concludes modernity and the rise of bureaucratic governing bodies have enabled people to see themselves as mere instruments. People become means, but they also can see themselves as only tools. While she does not explicitly express this idea, it seems to follow that she senses everyone is victim to a structure commanding irresponsibility. It seems to be a paradoxical argument, but one can begin to see the universal problems with treating people like tools to reach some end. If there is an existing structure promoting alienation, subordination, and irresponsibility, then it follows that those living under such a system would simply begin to follow that system. She does not deny there would be dissenters or those

who are freely able to assert their own free will, even at the cost of their own lives, but the majority would be caught in the trap of such a system.

However, by making Hitler and his followers into monsters who are driven to kill by some internal deficiency in their psyches or biology, there is no way intervention or prevention could occur. This would remove any responsibility of all human beings to collectively unite against oppression. There would be no need for free will. In addition, Hitler and others become the center of analysis, instead of a dialogue of the question: "how could this happen and how can humans ensure it will never happen again?" In a sense, the approach Arendt argues against diminishes the culpability of not just one individual but the society, which allows the Holocaust to occur. Arendt expresses such an explanation of totalitarianism as a social ill, not the fault of a singular person, group, or society:

Totalitarian movements are possible wherever there are masses who, for one reason or another, have acquired the appetite for political organization. Masses are not held together by a consciousness of common interest and they lack that specific class articulateness which is expressed in determined, limited, and obtainable goals. The term masses applies only where we deal with people who either because of sheer numbers, or indifference, or a combination of both, cannot be integrated into any organization...Potentially, they exist in every country and form the majority of those large numbers of neutral, politically indifferent people who never join a party and hardly ever go to the polls. (Arendt, "The Origins of Totalitarianism" 576)

By bringing forth the contention that anyone in any country is susceptible to the influences of totalitarianism, Arendt is illustrating that no one is safe from the penetration of totalitarian ideology. She is also proposing that all people be held accountable for the actions of the Nazis, in that, by allowing conditions and ideology to flourish without prevention and intervention, governments and involved peoples who do not act are able to become complacent spectators to horrifying events and are guilty of crimes themselves.

Arendt explicitly contends that the death camps were a terrifying state of limbo in which human beings were expected to live inhumanely. Each day was filled with the knowledge one might die or live. Either way, she states, this existence is essentially devoid of any purpose other than torturing the victims. The isolation caused by such camps are truly, Arendt contends, the most

inhuman aspect of the policy: "The real horror of the concentration and extermination camps lies in the fact that the inmates, even if they happen to keep alive, are more effectively cut off from the world of the living than if they had died because terror enforces oblivion" ("Total Domination" 124). Arendt goes on to express the complete difference of the existence in concentration camp from any other possible experience. Humans are not simply reduced to an animalistic status, they are purposefully made to doubt and forget their existence:

There are no parallels to the life in the concentration camps. Its horror can never be fully embraced by the imagination for the very reason that it stands outside of life and death. It can never be fully reported for the very reason that the survivor returns to the world of the living, which makes it impossible for him to believe fully in his own past experiences. It is as though he had a story to tell of another planet, for the status of the inmates in the world of the living, where nobody is supposed to know if they are alive or dead, is such that it is as though they had never been born. (Arendt, "Total Domination" 125)

By discussing both the conditions of the camps and the resulting person who is able to emerge alive after they are closed, Arendt ensures that the origins of totalitarianism are not the only concern that should emerge after the war. Human beings were denied the right to exist and live, not just as free people, but also as people. The insidiousness of the Holocaust lies, for Arendt, in the fact that it was able to occur at all. Arendt wants to stress such a point so that the victims are remembered, not just the individual Nazis.

Critical analysis has been leveled against Arendt for her refusal to discuss the practical application of rights. Instead the topic revolves around the lack of rights. Many critics have desired the discussion of what rights ought to be guaranteed to human beings. Her avoidance of the topic of essential rights has caused many to devalue her philosophy as merely a mirror of what actually occurred during the Holocaust, not an attempt to explain and evaluate the modes of prevention. Arendt points out that such a discussion is unable to occur because there is no collective definition of rights: "To raise the question, what is freedom? seems to be a hopeless enterprise. It is as though age-old contradictions and antinomies were lying in wait to force the mind into dilemmas of logical impossibility...it becomes as impossible to conceive of freedom or its opposite as it is to realize the notion of a square circle" ("What is Freedom" 438). She is not essentially denying the ability to construct the rights humans

ought to have. Only when governments and their peoples dialogue the need for rights, can rights actually surface and, in turn, be protected. By denying Jewish people of their rights within the states in which they were citizens, the governments and structure based on the Enlightenment's natural rights failed. While she does not distinctly define what must be protected, she certainly is not ignorant that something must exist in order to guarantee more rights for everyone.

The largest critical examination of Arendt's work has been leveled against her terminology with reference to "the banality of evil." The idea that the Holocaust's evil was something ordinary is abhorrent to many. Stephen Miller discusses the idea of banality of evil in great scope. His argument is that Arendt misses a central point when she uses such terminology. He is concerned with how she could label mass deeds as banal:

Banal was a curious word choice. It is an aesthetic term, not a moral one. It applies more to ideas as Flaubert used it, than to deeds. One could perhaps speak of the banality of an evil act if one were engaged in the dubious task of judging how inventive a particular evil deed was...Were the murderous deeds committed by the Nazis banal? The question makes no sense. Evil acts, it seems clear, are neither banal [n]or not banal. (Miller 55-56)

And, as he points out, Arendt is not discussing the ideas and philosophy driving Nazi policy during World War II. This is perhaps the only argument that can be applied against her theory. However, the terminology is the problem, perhaps, not the idea that the structure of Nazism was able to be what she had considered completely ordinary in modern times. Miller says her theory of evil is a "muddle," but the distinctive qualities she associates with Nazism are truly systematic of modern bureaucracy (Miller 58). This seems to be the point Arendt is really stressing in her work.

The definitional essence of banality seems to be a part of the Holocaust. By denying the responsibility of those who participated, on any level, of the Holocaust, we are voting indifference. Seeing Hitler or Eichmann as simply psychologically or biologically troubled or to use the term "evil" is to deny they are responsible. It also conditions a response of helplessness and inaction. If we recognize that a society is capable of genocide, then we can begin to change it. However, if we only understand the Holocaust as something inherent to a few individuals, we then further destroy the memories of those killed. People would

probably conclude they would never commit the horrible acts that transpired during the Holocaust. Most would rather see themselves as freedom fighters than the oppressors of human dignity. But ordinary people loaded gas chambers and trains, leading to the camps, with human beings from the ghettos. By judging those involved as pure evil we begin to forget the Holocaust could happen again. It becomes distanced from the mind and the Holocaust is reduced to being just another terrible event in human history that occurred because bad people were doing bad things. We also become victims, instead of actors, if one forgets that anyone can destroy the dignity of another. We decide that particular people were essentially inhuman and evil for what they did. We objectify those participants in the Holocaust; at the same time, we arrogantly conclude we would never be a part of such a system that would label particular people as inferior and then exterminate them. In my opinion, seeing the Holocaust as an event outside of our society will ensure it will happen again (and it did, of course, occur again in Bosnia, Cambodia, Uganda, and others).

Hannah Arendt provokes both criticism and praise. She is both conservative and revolutionary. She analyzes the abstract political and philosophical spheres, while she examines the science of history and sociology to gain insights into the human condition and the Holocaust. Arendt not only attempts to answer the particular questions resonating after the Holocaust, but she also raises more questions about the nature of all societies. Critics have found some problems with Arendt's work, but few question the full textual meaning and the implications. In the end, Arendt's hope is clear. She is attempting to prevent the Holocaust from occurring again. For her, no one ought to be stateless or without rights. Privileges of those who are oppressing and the rightlessness of those who are oppressed must both be examined closely if we hope to maintain some level of peace in the world. Arendt's claims are not the only way, nor are they necessarily completely correct when she analyzes how and why the Holocaust occurred. Combining Arendt's theoretical ideas with other philosophies, however, brings us closer to understanding the multi-dimensional reasoning behind and effects of the Holocaust. Nothing touching so many lives can easily be explained. If one is to take anything from Arendt, it would be some of her constructs on action, collectivity, and responsibility. One of the primary conclusions drawn from Arendt's work is that there must be a universal concern, not only for rights or their loss, but the ability for people across the globe to take responsibility and act in the best possible way to preserve all of humanity. To

underestimate this position is to truly miss Arendt's theory. By blaming only one or a few individuals for an event like the Holocaust, we lift our own responsibility. The need for universal change is dependent on acting with such ideas in mind. If we continue to ignore these concepts and ideas, Arendt would have more reason than ever to be ashamed of being human.

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Christine Dittmar
Soccer Mom Unabridged

That's my son by the calendar. He is star student for the week. I'm here as a prop: a thirty-seven-year-old, married woman, the mother of two, with a Rosie O'Donnell build. It doesn't leave much for the imagination. How did I get to this place in life? How did women? The image of woman has gone through so much. Sitting here being displayed as a domestic in a room full of first graders is humiliating. What was it he wrote on grandparents' day? "I love my grandparents because...she feeds me." My mother-in-law took it well and with the love intended, but what did she feel with those words? She has traveled the world, can barter in several languages, is well read and yet basically viewed as a nurturer. Why does this all feel so degrading?

One item of note: his paper didn't bother to mention grandpa. That was satisfying. Grandpa fades into the scenery easily. "Because she feeds me...." How long have women worn that apron? Back in the Paleolithic period, did everyone fend for himself or did the women take care of the menu? We've grown up with cartoons of men dragging clubs with their women waiting back at the cave, babes in arms. Men were the hunters. In the history books, the women were, if anything other than child rearers, the gatherers. Who wrote those books?

Nursing children and carrying their little bodies around inside for nine months can hamper hunting techniques, yes. But why didn't the men stay home to nurse the young? Those nipples were intended to serve some purpose. It is assumed the men hunted and the women gathered what little they could while the glaciers covered the earth. People found refuge in the caves and naturally in each other, which propagated the species. A woman needing to provide food for or to protect her young was just as likely to have been swift with the club, yet it was the men that are remembered for their hunting prowess.

The Venus figures are said to have come out of a period in history dating from 20,000 to 10,000 BCE. Their undulating breasts, rolled bellies and swollen vulva show the prominence of women during that time in history. My body fits too easily into this profile. Note to self: Yard sale the full-length mirror. Alright, my boy is starting to talk about the weather. Let's get this show on the road. So what was it that brought women from the caves, to idols, to goddesses, then

back down to the woman sitting in this 14" chair? People didn't know where kids came from back then, but they did have an appreciation for life. Women brought forth life, so there must have been a natural progression from those early Venus figures to the goddesses.

The Minoan snake goddesses looked powerful. Before the grassroots Adam and Eve tale was written, snakes were considered a sign of strength and renewal. Then people started to settle down. Coming down out of the caves as more land was appearing they found occupations in agriculture. Watching the animals interact must have been educational. There must have been a realization that babies were spawned from males, alpha males at that. Could that have been it? The glaciers receded, more land was appearing, and societies formed, and the men decided their role was one of dominance. This was the Mesolithic period. There is a topic — periods! Was the shedding of snake skins symbolic of a woman's monthly? It must have been amazing to see someone bleed for five days and be none the worse for wear at week's end. That was a godlike feat. Behold the goddesses.

Okay, now my son is introducing his dad. Will he mention the man is an abusive, misogynistic ass? (There is something sacred about a first grade classroom. Please omit the word ass and replace it with bottom dweller.) What have we already imprinted on this young man about gender roles? From the moment he was born a delineation was made, a blue cap put on his head and "male" written on the crib ID. How does the hospital handle intersexed babies? Yes, here is my son describing his dad going off to work on a daily basis, cutting wood and hunting deer. God no, we are living in a cave.

What is this kid going to say about me? Does he know me? No. He will someday hopefully. Will he read the Code of Hammurabi and believe it to be a significant historical work, or will he read item 143 and realize that I would have been drowned as a matter of public record. That code was written just after the Neolithic period when male gods began to appear in sculpture. Is it coincidence this document, with a multitude of laws defining women in submissive positions, came into being then? What documents will my son deem to be of merit? Will he adhere tightly to the Bible or look beyond to the Haggadah, the Book of the Dead, the Koran?

The story of Adam and Eve he knows, but what of Lilith? She did not obey, she was skeptical, she desired equality, and she left Adam of her own free will. Will my son hear this and think good for her, or will he relish the motherly Eve

who took her place? Is it Eve that I emulate? You have Lilith on one hand, full of ambition, lust, a non-conformist; and then Eve, devout, motherly, denying her physical urges, a holy figure. This duality is seen again with Mary Magdalene/Virgin Mary as sinner/saint, even as nature/nurture. Does my son see Lilith sitting beside this desk? Will he view suffrage, birth control, abortion as vocabulary words to define or as issues that strengthened women's roles in society? Will he dig porn? UGH!

Will he feel Bacon's approach to science eventually empowered women? Will he believe Freud's theory on penis envy? Will he see women for what they are, not what he is told they are? Will he stand up for what he believes? Will he read the *Feminine Mystique* sitting in the bookcase? Will he ever ask what's it like to be a girl watching the Miss America protest back in '68? What will he say, this boy that peered out into the world through these legs. Oh my God, what if he tells the class his mother is gay. Nope. That theme best be kept for a freshman essay.

He is speaking again. "This is mom. She reads. She does her homework. She loves me very much." Thank you Bryar. It's time to go. Walking out through the halls are the thick, aqua, painted cinderblocks that make his home away from home feel safe. There is artwork in the hallway. Construction paper, paint, string, sentences with backward j's and d's. It's an endless stream. Words are popping into mind: "If truth is that which lasts, then art has proved truer than any other human endeavor" (Winterson, dedication). This reminds me of the Venus figures and how they reflected what was true all those years ago. Looking for my son's picture... perhaps it will show what is true in his life. Art places marks on time. Here it is.

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Susan Antoszewski
Life Before Cable TV

Going back to the old neighborhood, you can stand at the corner, walk in any direction half a block, and be out of it. The houses, stores, and school are so close now. Growing up in the 1970s, I thought it was a concrete jungle with miles of streets and alleys. The fields we played in and the paths we used as shortcuts have all been replaced with houses and fences.

"Meet at the corner after supper!" was the cry you heard most. We packed our days full of games, bike riding, and building forts. The neighborhood was teeming with kids. Every neighborhood has that one family with a heap of kids. It was a tie between our house and the next-door neighbors - seven kids in each. It was great, the more brothers or sisters you had, the more friends that would trickle down to you. We didn't live in big houses either. They were small three bedroom houses with bigger yards than house. Every neighborhood has "the" hang out spot too. Ours was the corner of Dewey and Pear Streets. If you wanted to play anything at anytime of day, someone was always ready. A touch football game in the street, freeze tag in the front yard, or "smear the queer" in the nearby field. Today, the word "queer" will bring the threat of a defamation lawsuit. In the late 1970s, if you got the ball, you were the "queer," and better have your running shoes on. If not, go home and get the "How many times have I told you?" lecture on grass stains. Whole neighborhood games of Tag and Hide & Go Seek, which included the local cemetery as running ground, were the norm.

Greenwood Cemetery is a block away from our old house. When I was growing up, it was not considered a "dead" place. The word cemetery just happened to be in the name. It was a place to run and discover. We had the annual Halloween dare to see which kid would make it from one gate to another alone in the dark. Although it was the one night you noticed the word "cemetery" in the title, the trick was not to think about it. Most of us chickened out within the first fifty feet.

Riding your bike was like being Columbus discovering new worlds. If you were adventurous enough to go beyond the cemetery, it was fantastic. New street names to remember, new houses to survey, and you were the lucky one to tell your friends what was on the "outside." The only bad thing about your ride was the god-awful bell-bottom.

You had three options when dealing with the dreaded bell-bottom. First, you could risk being branded the village idiot by rolling up your pant leg, sticking it in your sock, or rubber-banding it. On the other hand, you could be a loser and put the un-cool chain guard back on your bike. If you decided to let it hang, you prayed your pant leg didn't get caught in your chain and you wouldn't have to go home explaining why your jeans were a greasy, mangled mess. It was a constant dilemma. Whoever thought up the clever fashion milestone of bell-bottom pants must have never ridden a bicycle.

The goal every summer was to have a fort in the nearby woods. It was commonplace to hear the pounding of hammers. We walked to Harvey's Five and Dime, the local "you name it, we have it" store. Once there, we bought the biggest nails (because every kid knew, the larger the nail, the more it would hold), found the lumber (just "there" in the woods, which was one of the great mysteries of life), and built until our arms were rubber. We would determine how high we should build by looking down. If you felt you might be hospitalized if you fell, you went high enough. If you might just get the wind knocked out of you, you could add a few more steps. That was the science of a bunch of nine to twelve year olds.

We did not have to worry about explaining everywhere we went to our parents. We were going out to "play" and as long as we were back for dinner, we could pretty much board a plane to China and back. There were no fights, no guns, and no sick-minded abductors. There was the legend of "Chester the Molester" driving around in his tan car with the green top, but you never saw it. This dates the urban legend - when was the last time you saw a car with a different color "top"?

We were not troubled with the current affairs of the world. Yellow ribbons adorned our trees, but we never knew they were for the hostages held in Iran. We were allowed to be kids without the worries. There were no home computers, no Internet, no video games (we had PONG but it really wasn't that fun) and no cable TV. Yes, friends, a world without cable TV. Flip through 500 channels? Hardly! Not a remote in sight! If you were lucky, you had the long forgotten, rabbit-eared, three-ton, turn-the-dial, black & white in your room. If not, you were at the mercy of your parents. You were the remote control. "Sue! Turn it to channel 5!" You only had six channels: 2, 5, 7, 9, 11, and 32. If you were extremely lucky, you got the South Bend channels on occasion. That was it! Heck, cable didn't come along until six years later! Playing outside was not the *better* option; it was the *only* option.

Dave White

We Were All Just Sitting There

We were all just sitting there
watching Ed Sullivan
when an angel plummeted
through the living room ceiling
landing sideways on the floor.
I was horrified.

My Father laughed along
with the television audience
at Topo Gigo imploring
with exaggerated shyness
in his thick French accent,
"Eddie, kees me Goodnight."

My two older sisters smiled,
acknowledging my Father's emotion.
His stare remained intently
on the television screen.
My mother continued her
pillowcase embroidery.

I couldn't take my eyes
off the angel lying there
on her side - beautiful, unconscious,
hair disheveled, head indented
into the aging maroon
rug of dark bouquets.

But then it was time
for me to go to bed.
I was nine and tomorrow

I could go back to school -
the only place where I
knew how to be good.

"Kiss your Father Goodnight,"
my mother said
matter-of-factly,
like she was telling me
to sweep the porch
or take out the garbage.

I walked around the angel
carefully, as though she were a
sleeping child, and I could see
the smooth, unscratched skin of her cheek
through the strands of auburn hair
that fell delicately across her face.

My Father worked swing shift
so I only had to kiss Him
Goodnight on Saturdays and
Sundays, and sometimes,
when I wasn't being good,
I would forget on Saturday.

I touched my lips to the
sharp dark whiskers of his cheek
that scraped against my face
like forty-grit sandpaper.
His mouth smelled like the empty
beer bottles next to his chair.

Out of the corner of my eye
I thought I saw the angel move,
but turning from my Father's cheek,
I saw it was only the cat

sniffing at the roofing and plaster
strewn across her white robe.

Sometimes my Father would try
to return my kiss if there
were enough empty beer bottles
lined up beside His chair.
But on this Sunday night,
there were only two.

The few times He did try
to kiss me, He didn't touch me
with His hands. He never touched me
with His hands. Not when He tried
to kiss me Goodnight
in the living room.

The angel lay there for
several years. I grew
accustomed to her presence
and moved around her like she
was a footstool, or a magazine rack.
Then, one year, she disappeared.

Jenny Bucksbarg
Muddy Pants

When I started my journey
Through public education I
Dreaded
Going outside for the bus
The huge black dog
(Twice my size)
Waited
Ready to leap on his affection

It doesn't cross a dog's mind
That small girls are easily
Knocked down
Dogs are oblivious to tears
Dogs don't realize that there is
No time to change pants
(Paw prints of mud stamped on both legs)
Dogs don't care if girls miss the bus

Dogs want:
Noses stroked
Heads rubbed
Bellies scratched

No matter if they soil pale pink pants

My mother knelt down
Wiped my tears
Comforted
"Those pants aren't ruined, they will wash"
(Purple pants with golden stars exchanged for soiled
pink)

Next time the dog
Leaps
With paws of mud
I sharply kick
(yelps of pain and surprise)
And pale pink
Can be worn again
Despite any lingering stain



Rosalind Miller

Kristi Brosmer

To Great Heights and the Heights of Destruction

Constant revolutionizing of production, uninterrupted disturbance of all social conditions, everlasting uncertainty and agitation distinguish the bourgeois epoch from all earlier ones. All fixed, fast frozen relations, with their train of ancient and venerable prejudices and opinions, are swept away, all new-formed ones become antiquated before they can ossify. All that is solid melts into air, all that is holy is profaned, and man is at last compelled to face with sober senses his real conditions of life and his relations with his kind. (Karl Marx, "Manifesto of the Communist Party," 207)

The world of *Wuthering Heights* is built on decay, alienation, passion, mastery, and property. It is a world that perfectly illustrates the manifestation of economic disparity and social stagnation. *Wuthering Heights* provides a ladder in which characters may climb, but in the end it is only a broken ladder presenting both the ideal of equality of opportunity and the reality of social relegation and stigma. *Wuthering Heights* is a primal struggle between classes, between those who have wealth and those who control the means of production. The final outcome involved in each struggle always returns to an attempt to gain power and the economic value of different characters, not only as laborers, but also as representatives of capital themselves. The means of production is controlled through the text itself, the land, sexuality, and slavery. Interestingly, Brontë's novel illustrates the functional basis of both quasi-feudalistic capitalism and modern capitalism as the same; the end would always be the same. For Brontë's novel, humans and their relationships are a form of power domination and submission, real capital and symbolic capital. Her characters are morally multi-dimensional, presenting a difficult web to disentangle. There is neither hero, nor villain. Thus, characters are more than just one symbol, which leads the reader seeing the deep seeded issues inherent within the economic structure.

The text itself, a work of labor and production, is a part of the system that is critiqued in *Wuthering Heights*. Layering the narrative with multiple voices dynamically changes the relationship between characters in the novel. Mr. Lockwood, representing the leisurely upper-class citizens, finds *Wuthering*

Heights and its master an interesting opposition to his own world. Wanting to know how someone of such wealth could also be so troubled, he solicits Nelly Dean, a servant at the Heights and the Grange for eighteen years, to tell him the tale. One might contend that momentarily Nelly holds all power; she controls the means of production and the capital. However, her status as a servant already relegates her to a place of powerlessness and dictates the social convention by which she must abide. To appease her new master, she must provide him with the entertaining story. The power basis is already established and she becomes his tool. After all, he has no interest in the affairs of the hired help (Brontë 48). Nelly's creative power is only able to materialize once Lockwood enters the Grange. In order to produce, Nelly must have Lockwood and vice versa. This seems to invert the power structure to a more egalitarian state. The use-value only becomes present when Lockwood becomes master of the Grange, and by extension, master of Nelly. It is Lockwood who controls the beginning and the ending of the text. It becomes his intellectual property to pass on and Nelly lives on in alienation at the Grange. She no longer may distribute the property and is left as she began as part of the working class structure.

Brontë could understand the problems facing those unable to have control of the capital. No one would publish *Wuthering Heights* until notorious publisher Newby saw the success of her sister's novel, *Jane Eyre* (Blaine 162-163). Newby's practice represented the difficulty women writers experienced in publishing their works during the nineteenth century. Emily Brontë, for instance, had to pay fifty pounds in advance to Newby before he would publish her work (Peterson 8). Of course, he went back on his agreement that he would repay her advance after the first 250 copies were sold (Peterson 8). Ironically, Brontë lost money from the publication of her classic novel, making the relationship between Lockwood and Nelly Dean realistic. The inability to control the distribution of creative materials or lose the power involved with it was a new historical reality facing writers at the time, especially women writers like the Brontës. Lockwood is like the bourgeoisie publisher controlling the text from its interior and exterior. He becomes the master of the text itself.

Ownership and value of land and private property are main themes in *Wuthering Heights*. The title itself sets the book up to be a property. Not only is it symbolically the property Heathcliff and Hindley wish to possess, it becomes the focus of all that will occur in the text. Unlike the Grange, *Wuthering Heights*

is the property of the readers. It is owned by all who would read it, and interestingly the end of the novel suggests it belongs to no one else but the readers as it is boarded up and left.

The Heights is left in utter decay possibly suggesting, as many critics have held, that the novel in its historical context is a representation of an old feudalistic society being overrun by a new modern capitalism and Hareton has become the new capitalist. This would be an impossibility under the tight social restrictions of feudalism (Eagleton 410-411). It is also possible that all property does not belong to one family or one person. Perhaps the Heights is not a remnant of the past as much as it embodies the evils of modern capitalism. Most likely, Bronte was able to find the positive and negative aspects about both feudalistic capitalism and modern capitalism. However, the lineage and passing on of property in *Wuthering Heights* is tied to the parents who originally held it. In this way, even the new modern aspects are overrun by the feudalistic social ideology. Hareton gains access because his father was an Earnshaw and Cathy is given property because her mother was an Earnshaw. Heathcliff had no real potential of owning the land on which he was brought as a slave, an idea that will be developed later. Nor can his son possibly gain control because he is part of the "bad" and unknown lineage of his father. The real power and control of the estates is to be held by those who originally controlled them.

Most of the Marxist criticism of *Wuthering Heights* concentrates on the role of men as agents of the economic structure. A close look at the novel, however, must not exclude the role of the women, particularly Isabella and both Cathys. Marx critically noted the situation of women under a capitalistic structure: "The bourgeois sees in his wife a mere instrument of production. He hears that the instruments of production are to be exploited in common and, naturally, can come to no other conclusion that the lot of being common to all will likewise fall to the women" (Marx 224). The system exploits them, and the way in which they work within the system points to an important argument from the text about the nature of women. Women like Cathy and Isabella are victims in the novel. They are bound by the condition of marriage as the only source of social and economic betterment, which is the society's ideal. Catherine tells Nelly of her reason for marrying Edgar Linton instead of Heathcliff in terms of such betterment. She is conditioned in such a system, ignoring romantic love: "And he will be rich, and I shall like to be the greatest woman of the neighborhood, and I shall be proud of having such a husband...It would degrade me to marry Heathcliff, now; so he

shall never know how I love him" (Brontë 84, 86). The reality of her situation permits her to ignore love and marry for wealth. Thus, she becomes part of the economic system while, at the same time, she is separate from power inherent in it. Isabella marries for two reasons, one of which is her apparent love for Heathcliff returning from his journey abroad. The other is the attraction to Heathcliff as a source of power and monetary security. Before his leaving, Isabella would have paid no attention to the orphan boy, but with his return he is described as attractive, dignified, and retaining "no marks of former degradation" (Brontë 98). No longer the slave, he promises a secure future. Isabella, powerless in the domestic sphere after the arrival of her sister-in-law, attempts to gain her previous state as mistress through union with Heathcliff. Her marriage is unhappy, and yet she is bound, unable to escape. Catherine's daughter faces a similar predicament when she marries Heathcliff's son. Cathy's husband dies, allowing her to have a change of a more equal marriage with Hareton. The love between Hareton and Cathy is seemingly based on mutual sharing and transcends the boundaries holding their ancestors to tragic marriages.

Women are also unwilling tools by the men who use their productive labors as a vehicle to continue the male legacy. Besides his obvious distaste for Heathcliff, Linton opposed the marriage between his sister and Heathcliff because of the "degradation of an alliance with a nameless man, and the possible fact that his property, in default of heirs male, might pass into such a one's power" (Brontë 102). The potential for producing a male heir is of great importance to the land-owning men in the novel who wish to pass on their property. It is a historical reality that women are external from the land-owning system, but it is interesting that the property in the end is passed on to Cathy, instead of Hareton. In some way, her being the only heir to her parents and her unsuccessful marriage allowed her to gain power and control of the estates. It is Hareton who gains land through his marriage and Cathy seems to willingly pass it on to him. Perhaps, Brontë suggests that once women are given the ability to have some entitlement to land external from the simple production of children, then marriage itself may be able to become successful. Readers do not truly know the fate of the final characters, but they do not seem to reap the same fate their parents had. In this way, Brontë again shows contempt for the obvious capitalistic patriarchy plaguing the earlier female characters. Women's slavery is not the worst possible fate in Brontë's novel: two other characters must face

more degradation and assault.

Just as women are commonly exploited and in turn exploit, the character of Heathcliff as slave and his relationships with those who lord over him is particularly important to the text's meaning. The word 'master' is used over 200 times in the novel, pointing to the difference between the master and the slave. Heathcliff is a contradiction, becoming the master and the slave at once. On one hand he is the noble savage, represented by a singular name. He is represented as a Hamlet or a MacBeth yet is at the same time denied the lordship with which they are bestowed. Unlike the Renaissance princes, Heathcliff is also radically different from those around him. He is perpetually kept outside by racism and prejudice from everyone, but the older Earnshaw. He is described as "a dirty, ragged, black-haired child," the "gipsy brat," who speaks "gibberish" (Brontë 51). Furthermore, Heathcliff's family background is not questioned by older Earnshaw. He refers to the inability to know Heathcliff's "owner," and due to "his money and time, being both limited," he ought to bring the starving child home with him (Brontë 50-52). Maja-Lisa Von Sneidern points out that it was Liverpool that had the highest rate of incoming slaves between 1763 and 1776 (172). Citing C.P. Sanger's chronology of *Wuthering Heights*, Von Sneidern posits that Earnshaw's journey to Liverpool occurred right before the harvesting in 1771. At the same time, the Somerset case and the Mansfield decision were made which neither abolished nor called for the involuntary return of slaves to colonies from which they may have escaped (172-173).

The text is full of evidence suggesting Heathcliff is a slave imported from Africa: "In lieu of a whip for Cathy and a fiddle for Hindley, objects emblematic of the cruelty and indolence nurtured by institutionalized slavery, Earnshaw substitutes Heathcliff" (Von Sneidern 173). Heathcliff is the replacement for the objects, and thus becomes an object. He becomes a personal belonging to Catherine and a subjugated laborer to Hindley. His state represents the final blow Brontë throws at capitalism. Even the name Heathcliff denotes the state in which he finds himself. His self is forever tied to the status of slave. The association with Heath as a poor, coarse, cool, wasteland, absent of life describes the personality developed in a man who is unwillingly brought into the system at the time as he is personally kept out of it. He has no wages, no worth; he is a commodity that is exploited and dehumanized again and again despite the best intentions of the older Earnshaw. He is unable to climb the social ladder until he is able to escape his material bondage. He acknowledges his state as

"other" as a child, comparing his appearance with those unlike him. Despite his knowledge that he is doomed to fail, he does his best to reach the top: "But...if I knocked him down twenty times, that wouldn't make him less handsome, or me more so. I wish I had light hair and a fair skin, and was dressed, and behaved, as well, and had a chance of being as rich as he will be" (Brontë 67).

Such ideas of richness and security drive him to journey abroad after the realization that Catherine's rejection is because of his "degraded state." But, on his return from his world journeys, he continues the capitalistic cycle and begins to exploit Hareton. He labors him and continues to keep him alienated. On Isabella's arrival to the Heights she describes her nephew by his "ruffianly" state and "dirty garb" (Brontë 130). She unknowingly connects Hareton with Heathcliff saying, "He replied in a jargon I did not comprehend" (Brontë 130). By keeping "his nephew" in a state similar to his own, he is able to exploit the child for his own purposes. Unlike Heathcliff, Hareton escapes the system by sympathizing with the man who tortured him. It seems sure that Hareton will not repeat the cycle as Heathcliff did. Even at Heathcliff's death, Hareton suffers more than everyone else: "But poor Hareton, the most wronged, was the only one that really suffered much" (Brontë 283). By retaining the dignity associated with humanity, he escapes the system. Perhaps he was meant to do so from the beginning. Unlike Heathcliff, Hareton is not the product of African slave trade. Similar to Heathcliff, he is the product of a marriage in which his mother's background is unknown to everyone, but his father. Nelly tells Lockwood, "What she was, and where she was born, he never informed us; probably she had neither money nor name to recommend her" (Brontë 57). He becomes caught in the wake of Heathcliff, who keeps him in an infantile state and is seemingly able to do so with little objection because of his outsider mother and alcoholic father.

Heathcliff, who is set up to be beaten down by Hindley and degraded by Catherine, is the only character who remains tainted by his roots. His son, who would carry on Heathcliff's genes, is weak and ill and bound to death. He is marked by the racial genes his father bestowed upon him and is therefore unable to succeed in the text. His lineage fails, despite all of his various attempts. Only the children of the united families are entitled to take on the property and land of their ancestors. This final word from the text suggests that while Brontë finds inherent problems in the system of capitalism, it is still able to function if it is slightly altered to allow some mobility.

Wuthering Heights is a deeply layered attempt to critique and also accept

the economic structure of capitalism in the nineteenth century. While the text suggests that mobility ought to be present for women and children of "old money," it also keeps the racially different Heathcliff in total subjugation. He and Nelly lose their intellectual and materialistic capital because they are forever part of the proletariat, not belonging to the old or new bourgeoisie. There is no place for "new money" in *Wuthering Heights*. The economic struggle is apparent in *Wuthering Heights*, but readers are left with no real change at the end. In fact, the property that had belonged to them is now in utter decay and the system goes on for those who are lucky enough to reach great heights.

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Dave White
Climbing Tahoma

In 1792, George Vancouver was exploring Puget Sound when he saw a "round snowy mountain" off in the distance, and decided to name it after his friend, Rear Admiral Peter Rainier. To the Puyallup, Nisqually, and other Native Americans it was known by many names, all of which sound something like "Tahoma." There are various interpretations of this name, but they all imply god-like qualities. Although these Native Americans had lived in the valleys and on the shoulders of Tahoma for over 4000 years, the mountain now bears the name of an English Naval officer who never saw it, given to it by an English explorer who never came near it.

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It was the summer of '73. The Vietnam War had been lost, but was not over. Nixon was no longer a credible president, but it would be another year before he resigned. The nation of destiny meandered left and right with no clear direction. Perhaps the Promised Land had been an illusion. I was twenty-two. I didn't know where I was going, but I was impatient to get there.

It was Friday. The skies were clear and were forecasted to remain that way all weekend. Rich and I left the job-site early and went to his place, where we threw our nail-bags and more expensive tools in the garage. After grabbing his pack and tossing it in the back of his pick-up, we raced to my place, got my gear, and we were on our way. It's a two-hour drive from Port Orchard to Paradise, and we got there around 6:00 that evening. Our plan was to say hello to our friend Steve, who had a summer job at the snack bar, maybe get a free dinner through our connection, and then start our assault on Rainier.

Mount Rainier is an active volcano about a half million years old. It is a living entity that alternately experiences short periods of growth (eruptions), followed by long periods of deterioration (dormancy). Its last major eruption occurred during the Crusades about a thousand years ago. The most recent minor eruption occurred around 1840, while the Cherokees were being marched from Georgia to Oklahoma, and the wagon trains were bringing settlers from Missouri to California. Currently, it is in a period of deterioration.

Unlike the high peaks of the Rockies, it rises from near sea level and stands

several thousand feet taller than the mountains surrounding it. The rugged snow and ice covered dome dominates the horizon of the major population centers of Western Washington, and on a clear day is visible to hundreds of thousands of people. If someone in the Pacific Northwest refers to "the Mountain," you know which mountain they're talking about.

Rich and I had successfully climbed many mountains that were technically more difficult than Rainier. We were particularly proud of scaling the north face of Unicorn Peak after the National Park Service had forbidden that route because it was too dangerous. But telling people we had climbed the north face of Unicorn Peak, or the west face of Guye Peak didn't impress them. They would inevitably ask, "Have you ever climbed Rainier?" We were tired of answering "no" to that question.

We weren't really looking forward to this climb. At 14,410 feet, Rainier was over twice as high as most of the Olympic and Cascade peaks we had climbed. Two out of every three people who attempt the ascent experience some form of altitude sickness. Climbing it is primarily an endurance test, one that most climbers fail. You have to just keep putting one foot ahead of the other, uphill step after uphill step, mile after mile, as the air becomes thinner and thinner. Once you leave Paradise, Rainier is nothing but snowfields, glaciers, and dark gray volcanic rock. No meadows, no wildlife and very little running water. The Mount Rainier National Park brochure describes it as "an Arctic island in a temperate zone."

Those who make it to the top talk about the sense of accomplishment they feel, but they seldom mention any type of enjoyment in getting there. When Sir Edmund Hillary was asked why he climbed Mt. Everest, he replied, "Because it is there." That always seemed a bit ambiguous to me. I think he probably climbed Mt. Everest for the same reason that Rich and I were climbing Rainier - not because it was there - but because everyone else knew it was there. Returning to base camp after the first successful ascent of Mt. Everest, he told fellow expedition member George Lowe, "Well George, we've knocked the bastard off."

Rich and I had been friends since we were in band together in junior high school. He played the baritone; I played the trombone. Short and stocky with thick black hair, tough Eastern European skin, and perpetual five o'clock shadow, he looked like the carpenter he had always wanted to be. At 22, he still lived with his parents, eight brothers and one sister, and he never missed Mass on

Sunday. Rich, like many Catholics of that era, believed a Catholic could go to hell for missing Mass the same way he could for rape, murder, or robbery. This had always complicated our climbing endeavors, by giving us the window of time from Friday night to Sunday morning to drive to our starting point, climb the mountain, descend, and drive home. As a result, we had become two of the fastest climbers in the Pacific Northwest.

We would typically leave Friday night after work, drive to a trailhead, put on our packs, and hike till around midnight, using headlamps to find our way. We would then sleep until there was a hint of light in the sky, get up, have a thick slice of cheese on a hard roll, along with a couple of handfuls of gorp, and move on. We had bagged many of the summits of the Olympic Mountains by Saturday noon this way. Our descents would involve rappelling down rock faces, glissading down steep snowfields, and running down the lower slopes of the mountain. Usually, but not always, we could be back to the truck before dark, and Rich would get a good night's sleep before his weekly obligation. During the 60s, St. Gabriel's had added an afternoon Mass to accommodate those Catholics who had an important morning football game to watch. This important innovation had saved Rich's immortal soul more than once.

Although we didn't admit it to each other, we both knew that we would not be back in time for Mass on Sunday morning. I think we both doubted that we would actually make it back by Sunday afternoon, either, but felt that if we didn't acknowledge our doubts, God would forgive Rich's transgression as a slight misjudgment, rather than a willful act of omission.

Our deadline demanded that we take the fastest route to the summit - the Fuhrer Finger route. Our plan was to descend from Paradise down into the crevasse fields of the Nisqually Glacier that evening, crossing while it was still light, then ascend to the ridge on the other side, making our way up the Wilson Glacier to the base of the Fuhrer Finger. There, we would sleep for a few hours before beginning the arduous ascent of the steep ice chute. We would reach the top of the Finger by mid-afternoon and cross back onto the upper section of the Nisqually Glacier. From there, it would be a relatively easy hike to the summit, and we could be standing on top, basking in glory by early evening. We would then descend by the less treacherous guide route, stopping to sleep somewhere along the way, and be back to Paradise by morning. The plan was optimistic but seemed possible, if everything went smoothly.

We arrived in Paradise around 5:00 and found Steve washing dishes in the

kitchen behind the snack bar. Steve was the same age and about the same height as Rich, but his smooth, pale skin and light build made him appear younger. Steve and Rich had been best friends in elementary school. Then Steve had moved to Puyallup and, although they maintained contact over the years, they grew in different directions. Ecology. That was a new word in the early 70s. Steve had grabbed onto the idea and was pursuing a degree in environmental studies. Rich saw no value in that kind of liberal bullshit. Where the hell would he ever get a job with a degree in environmental studies?

When we told Steve what we were up to, he decided he would go with us. Our love for climbing was the common thread that linked our three different personalities, and seemed to supersede the more trivial aspects of our lives. Politics, religion, work, and family had little relevance when we were in the mountains. Steve could not pass up this opportunity to finally get a shot at Rainier. There was just one problem - he was scheduled to work on Saturday and Sunday. All employees are scheduled to work all weekends during the height of the tourist season at Mount Rainier National Park. He asked us to wait while he talked to his supervisor. Steve, unlike Rich and myself, was an outgoing, social kind of guy that could talk his way into or out of just about any situation. He told us he would be able to get Saturday off, but he would have to finish his current shift, which ended at 8:00, and be back to work Sunday morning. With a blend of youthful enthusiasm, male machismo, and absurd optimism, we convinced ourselves that we could reach the summit and return by 8:00 Sunday morning. Rich and I waited impatiently for Steve to finish his shift and pack his gear. Shortly after 9:00, when most people would be considering going to bed after a hard day's work, we started out on the most physically demanding climb we had ever attempted.

We debated the best way to attach the climbing rope to our harnesses, each of us coming to a different conclusion. Not coming to any agreement, we linked ourselves to the rope as we each saw fit and began our trek. Although it was dark when we started, the full moon shining on this arctic environment gave it a tranquil, serene demeanor. We felt quite secure traversing alongside the crevasses of the Nisqually glacier, unable to discern their depth or their icy coldness that is apparent when the white light of the sun turns blue as it approaches the bottoms of these chasms. We hiked contentedly without headlamps through the crevasse field, but didn't reach the base of the Fuhrer Finger until 4:30 A.M. We were hungry and tired, so we stopped to have some

breakfast, rest for a bit, and move on. We decided to raise our spirits by cooking the one freeze-dried dinner we had brought for the trip. Unfortunately, our stove refused to start. After half an hour of alternately pleading with it and cursing it, we gave up, ate some crackers and gorp and moved on, realizing that if we stopped to sleep, we would never reach the summit by our deadline. Now, with no sleep for 24 hours, we were starting on the steepest and most dangerous part of the climb.

The light of a new day brought new hope, and, even though we hadn't slept, our body clocks told us it was time to be awake. So for a short time we made steady progress up the steep ice chute. But as afternoon approached, rest stops increased, and as the air became thinner, our pace became steadily slower. At one rest stop, I sat down on the ice next to Steve. We sat looking over the tops of the peaks of the Tatoosh Range to the perfectly symmetrical snow-covered dome of Mt. St. Helens about fifty miles to the south. Rich was sitting off to the side staring blankly at a topographic map. No one was talking. The only thing that kept us awake was the knowledge that if we fell asleep our muscles would relax and our crampons would lose their somewhat tenuous grip in the ice. It was completely silent until I heard a sort of swishing sound behind me. I turned around and saw a boulder about the size of an easy chair, airborne and zooming toward us. Steve moved one way, and I moved the other. The boulder sped over the rope that joined us and continued on ferociously, but almost silently, skipping along the ice, to its eventual resting point in a crevasse somewhere far below us. This temporarily brought us out of our stupor, and we continued to the top of the Finger. But the effects of altitude and extreme fatigue were taking their toll.

We could no longer relate our environment to the symbols on our map. It's hard to say whether this was a result of altitude sickness or lack of sleep. We wandered too far to the east and became lost in the Nisqually Icefalls around 12,000 feet. Like a small city built by a modern architect gone mad, three and four story blocks of ice tilted randomly before us. We wandered aimlessly through the deserted streets of this city, finding mostly dead ends. But like determined tourists trying to find their way back to their hotel after the bars had all closed, we persevered and eventually staggered out of the icefalls to the edge of the summit dome near 13,000 feet. In front of us a crevasse stretched as far the eye could see - or at least as far as our eyes could see.

We stood there pondering our situation. It was nearly 7:00. We were still at

least two hours from the summit, but maybe more, considering our slow pace. The advantage of going on to the summit was that we could descend by the guide route, a heavily traveled route with minimal risks. Descending the Fuhrer Finger at night would be much more treacherous, but it would bring us to a lower altitude more quickly. Also, starting our descent now offered some hope that we could get back to Paradise in time for Steve to be at work by 8:00.

It never occurred to us to stop and sleep. Our original plan had the flexibility of extending our trip an extra day, with the confidence that God would forgive Rich for his slight misjudgment of the time needed to complete the trip. But Steve's supervisor was a much more formidable presence. College students from all over the United States apply for the few summer positions available at Mt. Rainier National Park. Steve had managed to talk his way into the position, and even talked his way out of working on a Saturday, but if he didn't show up Sunday morning at 8:00, there'd be hell to pay. By Monday, someone else would be happily washing dishes in Paradise.

After considering the pros and cons of going on to the summit or turning back, we decided to turn back. In retrospect, I can see that this was the wisest decision, but at the time, our capabilities for making wise decisions were non-existent. What it had really come down to was that we were just too damn tired to walk uphill anymore.

Silently, we wandered back through the icefalls, again losing our way, but by the time darkness had fallen on the mountain we were starting back down the Finger. After nearly 40 hours without sleep, the momentum of the weight of our packs pushing down on our knees with every steep downhill step was almost more than they could bear. But glissading on this steep ice in our condition was out of the question, so we plodded slowly, methodically down the mountain, reaching the bottom of the finger at about midnight. A crevasse stretched across the length of the Finger. The snow bridge that had granted us entry the previous morning had collapsed when it had thawed during the afternoon, and our only hope now was to try and jump across the dark void in front of us.

One of the main reasons for roping together while traveling on glaciers is that if a climber should fall into a crevasse, his other team members can quickly dig their ice axes into the snow, serving as an anchor to keep him from landing forcibly at the bottom. He can then, through the use of prussik slings or jumar ascenders, climb back up the rope.

In a case where the team can foresee the possibility that a member may fall

due to an uncertain snow bridge, or the necessity of jumping a crevasse, they can belay that member. This means that one climber anchors himself, usually in a sitting position, several feet back from the edge of the crevasse. The rope that links him to the climber who is about to attempt the crossing passes through his right hand, around his back and then through the left hand. He allows only enough slack on the rope to allow the lead climber to move freely. As the climber moves forward, the belayer lets out more rope. If the climber is crossing a snow bridge and it collapses, the belayer immediately pulls his left hand across his body, so that the rope is wrapped around his body, which serves as an anchor to stop the fall.

In a situation where a jump is to be attempted, the same basic technique is used, but the belayer must be sure to allow enough slack to permit the climber to land and take a step or two on the other side of the crevasse. The more slack the belayer allows, the further the climber will potentially fall before he can be caught, and the more momentum he will have generated, making the catch more difficult. However, not leaving enough slack will jerk the jumper to a sudden stop before he reaches the other side of the crevasse, causing him to fall in. This tends to really piss the jumper off, so it is generally better to err on the side of too much slack, rather than not enough.

I had been leading the climb, so I was the first to attempt the jump, while Rich belayed me. I don't know why I was the leader - maybe because at five feet ten inches I was three or four inches taller than Rich and Steve. Or maybe I just had more of a need to prove myself than they did. Unlike Steve, I had quit college after my first year, and was working in construction. Unlike Rich, I didn't belong in construction. Rich had always wanted to be a carpenter. I had always wanted to be a musician.

I took off my blue Cruiser pack and laid it next to Rich, checked to see that he had left plenty of slack, and mentally prepared myself for the jump. After 40-some hours without sleep, my mental preparation went something like "What the hell've I got to lose?" I took a quick, two step approach (running with crampons on your boots just doesn't work) and jumped across the 5-6 foot span. As I landed on the other side my crampons caught in the ice and I fell forward, but Rich's belay kept me from sliding more than a few feet down the steep ice. Rich threw the packs across to a point just in front of me so I could stop them as they slid toward me.

Next, Rich attempted the crossing with a belay from Steve. Landing and

falling on the other side, he felt a strange pain and tightness in his left leg. "It's broken!" he called, "My leg's broken!" I rushed over to him. As he had jumped, the slack in the rope had wrapped around his leg, causing him to immediately fall as he landed. As Steve's belay stopped his slide, the loop of rope had cinched tight around his thigh. Not realizing this, he was attributing the sensation to a broken leg. I pointed out the rope around his leg. "Oh - never mind..." he called back to Steve. This was the first, and as I recall, the only time we laughed during the entire climb.

After Steve had successfully crossed, we put on our packs and continued down into the crevasse fields of the Nisqually Glacier. Originally, we had planned to cross the glacier and ascend to the ridge above Paradise, returning exactly as we had come. But now we weren't really sure where our original route was, or where we would need to start our ascent of the ridge to assure that we would actually end up back at Paradise. There was an alternative. The road to Paradise crosses the Nisqually River less than a mile from the end of the Nisqually Glacier. "How about if we just continue hiking down the glacier to its end, then hike along the river until we come to the Nisqually River Bridge?" I asked. "Then we can just hitchhike back to Paradise."

Crossing the Nisqually glacier is one thing - hiking down it is another. There are dozens of crevasses along its length. Crossing it laterally, a climber just walks alongside the edges of a relatively few crevasses. To travel lengthwise on the glacier would involve walking around and, at times, jumping over a vast number of crevasses of varying lengths and widths. We pondered the two alternatives: attempt to find our way back by our original route, or head for the bridge. We knew that we couldn't get lost if we headed for the bridge, but the crevasses presented a real obstacle. There was one other factor. Returning by our original route would entail climbing the slope to the ridge above Paradise. Our crippled minds struggled to make a rational choice until gravity prevailed and our bodies started drifting slowly down the glacier.

It was about midnight. We had not slept for 42 hours, and as we trudged ahead, our brains lagged several steps behind. Considerable time would lapse between the time one of us would say something and another of us would attempt to comprehend the message, work out a response, and articulate it. A typical exchange during a crevasse crossing — either by bridge or by jump — would go something like this: "Belay on?" I would call to Rich, indicating that I needed a belay. Normally, I would have then waited for his reply of "Belay on!"

before proceeding. However, my body would go ahead and make the crossing without waiting for a response. As I proceeded down the glacier, I would eventually hear a voice behind me say, "What?"

It didn't take long for us to dispense with belays altogether. It would have taken an incredible amount of time for each climber to be belayed at each crevasse crossing, and it is highly unlikely that the belayer could have actually reacted quickly enough to catch his partner. The crevasses were so numerous that often all of us would be crossing different crevasses simultaneously.

Then the dreams started. Apparently, although my body was willing to continue, my brain needed a break. As I wound my way through the maze of crevasses, I would go to sleep and dream of other places and events far removed from my present environment. These were not daydreams but were exactly the types of dreams that are associated with sleep. The concept of hopping across crevasses on Mount Rainier at 1:00 in the morning seemed much less credible than the concepts of home or work that dominated my dreams, and I lost my ability to discern between waking and dreaming. I often perceived what I now remember as dreams to be my waking state, and my waking state as a dream.

My body continued to move forward independently of what was going on in my mind. My mind no longer recognized the weight of the pack on the body's shoulders, or the impact of the frequent jumps on its knees. It didn't recognize the cold, the pain, or the danger that my body was in. When it awoke, it interpreted that state as just another dream, and the physical sensations associated with my waking state were as detached as if they were in a dream. Reality no longer existed in any concrete sense. Our three bodies trickled down the glacier like a thin stream of water meandering back and forth between crevasses until we eventually flowed off the end of the glacier into the rocky stream that is the origin of the Nisqually River.

It was 2:00 in the morning. There were groups of bushes growing nearby. The light of the full moon had been sufficient for hiking on the white surface of the Nisqually glacier, but negotiating the gray and black volcanic rubble along the Nisqually River would be much more difficult. After a short discussion, we decided to sleep for a few hours, and continue on to the bridge at first light. I unpacked my sleeping bag and threw it on some bushes. Then I took off my crampons and boots, got into the sleeping bag and immediately fell asleep. This was not, however, a normal sleep - it was more like death. Not like the death

you fear - and not like the operating room death of tunnels and bright white lights. It was a welcome, dramaless death. No dreams. No thoughts. No images, words, or memories. Just blackness. It was an emptiness far beyond the normal space between dreams - an intense calm.

Somehow, Steve awoke at 6:00 and managed to revive Rich and me. I awoke to see Tahoma looming above me bathed in the soft gray light of pre-dawn. It took a few moments to figure out who and where I was, and where I had come from to find myself suddenly alive in this amazing environment. Four hours of sleep had transformed us. We packed our sleeping bags, ate the little bit of food we had left, and headed for the Nisqually Bridge.

As we came to the base of the bridge we determined that Steve should go on ahead. There would be a limited number of cars heading for Paradise this early in the morning and it was highly unlikely that a car would stop for three grungy young men with full packs. Rich and I waited under the bridge while Steve went up to the road. It was about 7:30. Almost immediately, a car stopped, he got in, and we knew he would be back to work by 8:00.

One car after another passed by Rich and me as we walked up the road, turning to stick out our thumbs whenever one approached. We hiked the two miles to Paradise, went into the snack bar and had a leisurely breakfast. Rich had 6 hours - plenty of time - to get back to St. Gabriel's in time for afternoon Mass. And me - I had no particular place to go and all the time in the world to get there.



Matt Henning

The Present

Amos T. Cooley

Jenny Bucksbarg

Shellie Higgins

Phoenix Rzetelny

Denis A. Rogers

Shellie Higgins

Danielle Weinhold

Kimberly Wiseman

Kelly Ganz

Amanda Haverstick

Christine Dittmar

Jenny Bucksbarg

Donald Dean



Rebecca Hall

Amos T. Cooley
High School Diploma

I went through a long hard process in attaining my high school diploma. I have a few different reasons why my diploma has emotional significance for me.

It all started when I was seven years old. Something happened that would change my life forever: my mother and father divorced. I was sitting in the living room on the arm of a peach love seat when my father told me that he was leaving, and that I had to be the man of the house. The first thing I thought about was my education, because both my father and mother are educated. I told myself that I had to graduate from high school, no matter what. At the time I thought it would be a simple task, because I was in the second grade and I was smart. Years went past, and I still couldn't get the divorce off my mind. Five years later I entered the seventh grade, which gave me a dose of reality, because it required me to pass from class to class, mingle with people from different sides of town, and take on new responsibilities. A lot of this was new to me, because I was an eleven-year-old church boy. The only thing I knew was my homework and church. I was at the age where I wanted to become a man and make my own decisions.

I made it through seventh grade. I remember thinking, "yeah this is it, not a worry in the world." After the seventh grade, over the summer of 1992, things started to change for me. I thought I was grown, so I took control of my life. I started hanging out with some of the people I met in school, because in a sense I admired them. I thought I was missing something. Once I started partying, I stopped studying the Bible and going to church. My eighth grade year had arrived, and I was still partying and avoiding church. My oldest sister who secretly inspired me was now at Purdue University, and I remember thinking that's the school I want to go to. All of my thoughts were of positive things, but my actions showed different. I did graduate from the eighth grade, and I was ready for the big leagues, high school.

In high school I took on new challenges. I played football, learned another language, and dated women. No matter what I did though, I made sure I kept my grades up. Things still weren't looking good for me in my personal life. I

had created a life that I didn't know how to dismantle. I started smoking marijuana and hanging in the streets. I would always have my books with me just in case I didn't make it home at night. I wanted my life back to normal, but I didn't know how to get it back. A lot of people couldn't see that there was a problem, because I kept a job and always made good grades in school.

During eleventh grade, the problems started to show. My sister was in school getting her bachelor's degree, while I was on my way to jail. My family and I used to drive back and forth to West Lafayette to visit my sister, because she was pregnant. That gave me a chance to see what it was like to live on campus and view Purdue. I really enjoyed it, but I just couldn't change. I was caught in a spider's web, and I couldn't get loose. I missed a lot of school that year, and I was expelled. I had never even been suspended from school, let alone expelled. I was devastated. During my time off, I took it upon myself to change a few things about me. The next semester had begun, and I didn't feel the same. I felt like I was living a dream. I managed to make it out of the eleventh grade with enough credits to make me a senior, but I was still struggling with myself.

My senior year came, and I was excited because, through every thing that had happened to me, I was still on track to graduate. My love for football was my ticket through the first semester; at least that is what I had planned. We had played eight out of nine games, and I just came off of the best game in my life when my life took another turn that cannot be forgotten, because it changed my life. On Oct. 9, 1998, I was waiting to go to school at the bus stop, with my football jersey on, so I could play in our last regular season game. That's when six unmarked police cars pulled up. A woman got out of one of the cars, called me by name, and said, "you are under arrest." I was charged with armed robbery. I had just turned seventeen years old, and I was on my way to jail. They set my bond at \$20,000, but I didn't bond out right away. I first called my father, who is the battalion chief of the fire department in Anderson, Indiana. I told him I know I messed up, but I have to have my high school diploma. He hung up on me. I said a prayer and then called my mother's best friend who is a schoolteacher at one of the vocational schools in Anderson. She got in contact with the G.E.D. teacher at the county jail, who is also a teacher at the same vocational school. They got in touch with my school and developed a plan for my tutor (the G.E.D. teacher) to bring my books and to monitor me while I take tests. That worked well for three and half months.

I finished the classes I needed to keep me on track to graduate, but I had to settle for F's in my electives, which brought down my G.P.A. Another problem had come up though. The school board said since I was incarcerated I could not finish high school, so I bonded out of jail. When I got out, my mother and I went to the school to enroll for my final semester. We set up a meeting with the school board members, and they told me that I could not attend school at all. I knew it was a violation of my rights, so all I said was, "See ya in court." They contacted us two days before the second semester started. Then they told me that I couldn't go to public school, but they had enrolled me in an alternative school for the semester.

Everything went well until my last day of school. On the last day, the seniors were supposed to rehearse for the graduation ceremony, which was to be held on Saturday. The school called my house and told me to show up at the high school at 1:00 pm. I showed up and went to the office to get my cap and gown, then proceeded to the gymnasium. They told my mother to leave me there, but to return at 4:00 pm to get me. As soon as my mother cleared the parking lot to go get her hair done, the school police and the principal showed up. The two of them took me to the office and told me that I was a menace to society and that I wasn't allowed on school grounds. Finally, they told me to leave. Since I was a juvenile they couldn't make me walk from school, which is located in the country. I couldn't get in touch with anyone, and they continued with their threats, so I ended up walking. My boxing coach saw me walking and gave me a ride home. I was hurt, because I didn't get to attend the ceremony, and my family had come from California to see me graduate.

When I got home, I was wondering how I would tell my mother that I would not be in the ceremony. She came home from the beauty salon and asked what I was doing home. I told her, and she didn't seem upset, so I felt better. Then she told me that she had stopped by the school to get my diploma, and that they told her that I would not graduate. The words she had spoken sent a dagger through my soul. I looked at her and said, "so I'll just get my G.E.D. in prison and get a time cut." I felt like a failure, I was crushed, and, more than that, I wanted to die. She knew what she said had overwhelmed me, but she grabbed me by the arm and guided me to the living room. There was this book, or at least that is what it appeared to be, and my mother told me to take a look. There was my high school diploma with a graduation picture on one side and a picture of me in my football uniform on the other side. I looked at her, smiled, and

jumped in the air yelling, " I did it." My mom said, "no son, we both did it." I hugged her, kissed her on the cheek, and began getting things ready for my graduation and going away party.

Everything went well at the party, but unlike most people I had something on my mind that was very bothersome. I didn't let it show at all, but ten days later I had to go to court and face my fate. I didn't know what to expect, but I had to go and get it over with.

As you can see, getting my high school diploma meant a lot to me, because I knew it would open doors of opportunity. Since then, I've been incarcerated, but I've completed a course in electronics. I entered myself into stress management, lifestyle changes, and active parenting. I am currently enrolled at Purdue North Central in my first semester, and I feel that I am doing very well. Most of these tasks would not have been accomplished without my diploma. I am very proud of myself for the changes that I have made within myself. On August 29, 2002, I will be able to put every thing that I have learned about life, the importance of righteousness, and myself to the test. Yes, getting my high school diploma is all that I had hoped for and more.

Jenny Bucksbarg

Alternative Education: Preventing Dropouts and Producing Productive Citizens

Society and the individual must function together in a continuous supportive circle in order to create order and harmony for all human beings. Communities must nurture individuals by offering services, and then individuals must take responsibility to be productive members of society. People must also support the services that the community provides. This enables the community to continue to provide these services that encourage individuals. One group of individuals that especially needs assistance is adolescents. Alternative education programs give these high-risk students the special support they need to be successful in school.

Adolescence can be filled with difficulties as teenagers struggle to find an identity and a place in our society. These difficulties include poor grades, poor attendance, illegal drug use, behavioral and emotional problems, and social issues. Many of these difficulties produce students who are unable or unwilling to function in a traditional high school. Students who are unsuccessful in a traditional high school environment need alternative routes to achieve graduation. Without such programs, these students would drop out and possibly become a burden to the community through their nonproductivity.

One service that the Bridgman, Michigan, community offers is an alternative education program, called ASPIRE (Alternative Students Participate In Redefined Education). The Bridgman community has offered the ASPIRE program for three years. Susan Luhrsen has worked as a paraprofessional for the entire time it has been in existence. She has seen the program help students with substance abuse, social problems, pregnancy, or attendance problems. These students need the program because they have made "poor choices that sabotage their high school success" (Luhrsen). ASPIRE helps these students move past their poor choices and become eligible for graduation.

Alternative programs are designed to essentially give students a second chance. Many students experience problems that interfere with their goal of graduation. Alternative high schools must design their programs to combat these problems. The alternative programs at Mount Pleasant, Michigan, and Bridgman, Michigan, schools have these characteristics:

Mount Pleasant

- Student ownership
- A "family" atmosphere; teachers and students are on a first name basis
- Teachers are adept at building student self-esteem
- Individualized instruction
- Experiential learning, outdoor education, and co-operative learning activities

(Meixner 32-33)

Bridgman

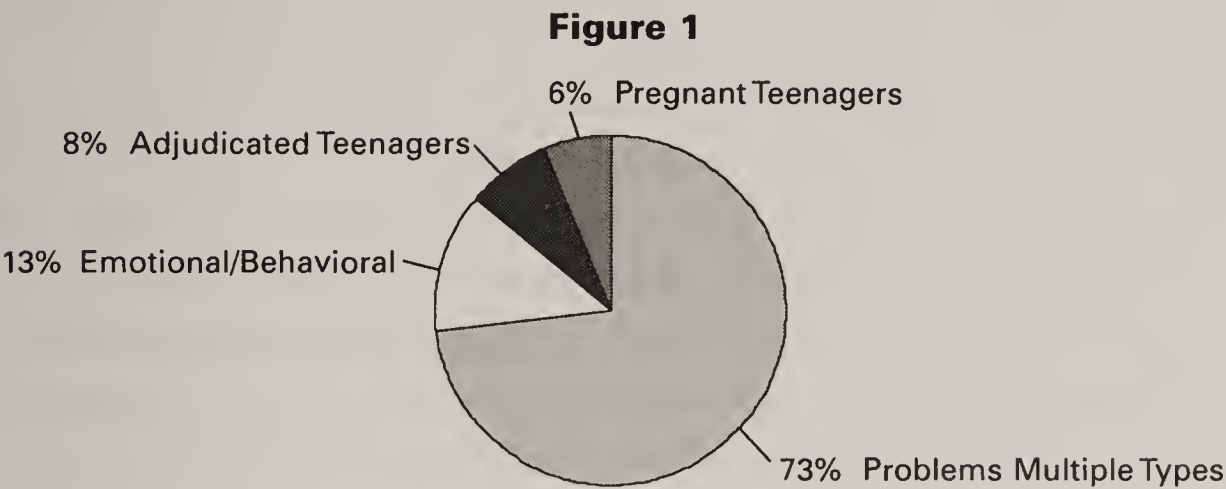
- Small class size
- A clean, cozy environment with a home-like feeling in a business-like atmosphere
- Mentoring
- Independent study
- Field trips, electives, and co-op (ASPIRE Program)

These characteristics are what make these alternative high schools effective. In alternative education, the emphasis should be on the student and his/her individual learning needs. The program needs to be tailored to the individual student because every student has unique difficulties to work through. Also, each student is at a different place academically. One aspect that is also necessary is a small class size. A high-risk student needs special individual attention and encouragement above and beyond what a traditional high school can provide. Ideally, students must learn to take personal responsibility for their lives in order to begin to be productive citizens.

It is enormously challenging to be a productive citizen without a high school diploma. Luhrsen claims that people today cannot even support themselves without a high school diploma, and it is extremely difficult to support a family without some form of higher education (Luhrsen). Those students who drop out will become a burden to their community if they are unable to support themselves. The Bridgman community provides ASPIRE as a way of prevention. These students are unable to function properly in a traditional high school. When they experience academic problems, their solution is to drop out. There is no simple reason for these students' discouraged learning, but the result of this discouraged learning is "depression, dropping out, drugs, jail and suicide attempts" (De La Rosa 268).

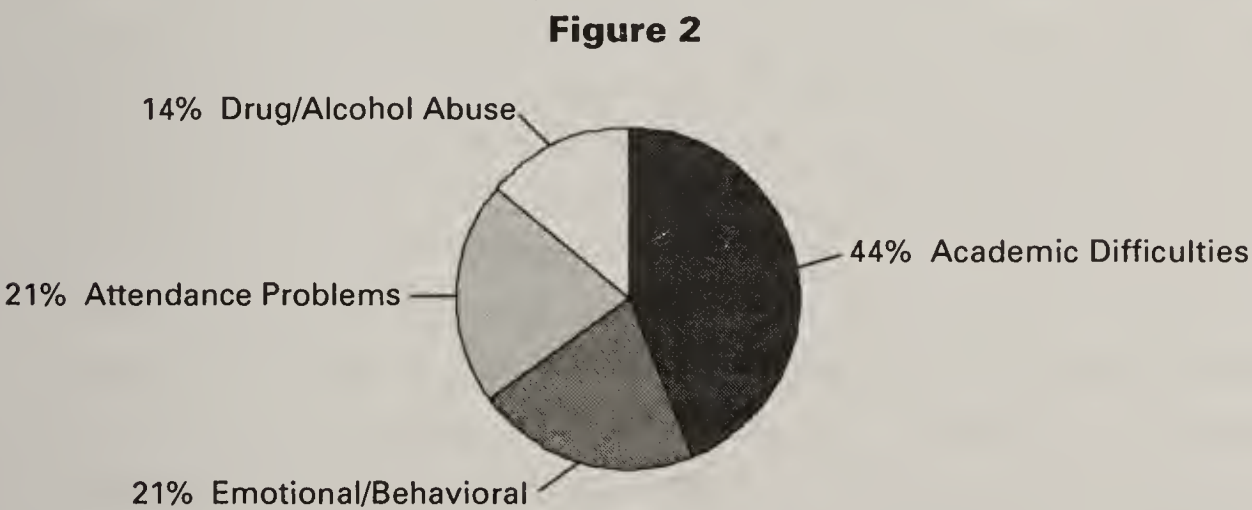
Disconnection with learning is not the only problem that high-risk students can face. A total of 8,918 students were surveyed at 115 alternative schools nationwide. Of these schools, 6% of students were pregnant teenagers, 8% were adjudicated students, 13% were students with emotional or behavioral prob-

lems, and 73% were multiple types of students populations (Grunbaum 5). Refer to Figure 1.



Most of the students did not have the problems that people typically label as high risk. They were not pregnant or abusive drug addicts. The discouraged learner is the most typical student in an alternative program.

The students in the ASPIRE program were also surveyed (see Figure 2). As the pie chart shows, the greatest percentage of problems leading to admittance into the alternative program is with academics.



Individual attention and encouragement can combat these academic difficulties. Sometimes a student is too far behind in his/her work to be able to function in a traditional classroom. Many of these students require special tutoring just to complete the requirements for a high school diploma.

Alternative high schools are needed to provide the extra support and encouragement that high-risk students deserve. High-risk students are those that have difficulties that sabotage their high school learning experience. Some

problems are self-imposed such as pregnancy, poor attendance, or drug abuse. But other problems are the combination of a student who needs extra support and a school system with no one to give it. In an alternative program these students are assured that they will receive that individual attention.

Alternative programs must be innovative to keep the students on track. High-risk students are by nature disgusted with traditional high school. "They may be disconnected from society in general. Most have learned to manipulate the educational and legal systems, their parents, and the community" (Lampres 68). These high-risk students are not stupid; they have found ways to circumvent the educational system that they find unappealing. An alternative high school is able to provide the extra attention and support that these disenchanted students need.

Most students in the ASPIRE program like the small class size and individual attention that they receive at the Bridgman Alternative High School. However, they find the isolation and rules constraining. One student wrote, "We're [excluded] from the high school and everyone from there...treat[s] us like crap and [like] criminals." Another student wrote that the least favorite part of the ASPIRE program is that "we don't get to go to the high school at all for our needs." They have described the irony in their situation. What these students have forgotten is that the reason they are in the program is that they could not function properly in the traditional high school. Their needs were not being met in the traditional classroom. They would never be able to receive the special individualized attention without the separation from the regular high school.

Students who are unsuccessful in a traditional high school are not necessarily delinquent, disagreeable, or degenerate. Most of these students did not have adequate behavioral models as children. Luhrsen claims that these students are "good people. They are neat kids who need TLC that they don't get from home or church." Ninety percent of these students have gone through the difficulties of a divorce or have experienced parental substance abuse. The community must step in to help supplement the individual student's family. Luhrsen not only facilitates earning a high school diploma but also models appropriate behavior. Besides this modeling she acts as a surrogate mother (Luhrsen).

Alternative education programs are necessary parts of the community. They provide students who are unable to function in a traditional high school with an opportunity to graduate. These students have made poor choices or experience difficulties in their high school development. These are not only

academic difficulties but also social problems. They need models of appropriate behavior and in some cases surrogate parents. Students should not be penalized for experiencing these problems.

Alternative high schools are needed to provide the extra support and encouragement that high-risk students deserve. In an alternative program these students are assured that they will receive that individual attention. By providing ASPIRE, or other alternative programs, the students will at least receive a high school diploma. This is one step in becoming a functional adult. The community needs functional adults to prosper. The community and the individual must act as a continuous circle of support and encouragement.

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Shellie Higgins
Kaytee Preferred Birds and Petsmart

“Many have forgotten this truth, but you must not forget it. You remain responsible, forever, for what you have tamed” (*The Official Website of The Gabriel Foundation*).

In 1997, Kaytee Seed Company and Petsmart teamed up and created the Kaytee Preferred Birds program. This program incorporated the selling of parrots at the majority of Petsmart locations. It is my opinion that this program was designed simply to increase profits. The true well being of the parrots was, at best, secondary. Even that secondary purpose looked mediocre on paper and was never properly implemented on the large scale.

There are several problems regarding Petsmart selling parrots to the public. One very valid issue is that Petsmart takes pride in not selling dogs and cats. It is somewhat of their mission statement. “Look how great we are. We care so much about your pets that we won’t even add to the over population of cats and dogs. You should buy from us.” While it sounds inviting, it is merely a facade, as they are truly looking at the bottom line, the almighty dollar, when it comes to the mass marketing of parrots. Their mission statement should have an addendum that states “Unless it’s parrots, as the profit margin is just too big to pass up.” Over 100 web sites are devoted to the rescue and adoption of unwanted parrots. This suggests, clearly, there is an over-population of unwanted parrots. That point alone makes Petsmart look badly and contradicts the reputation that they are trying to present.

Parrots are emotionally complex creatures. Scientific evidence proves that they have the mental capacity of a five-year-old child and the emotional level of a two-year-old child (Caldwell). With that documented evidence, I would like to pose a few questions. Would you ship a two- to five-year-old child in a plane to a large store, place it in a cage and leave it shivering to be gawked at by hundreds of people? Would you toss a few pamphlets to sixteen-year-old store employees on the proper feeding of the child, knowing full well that if not administered correctly the baby will aspirate and die (Letter 93)? Would you, then, give the baby to the first person with the right amount of money, never once educating the person to the intelligence and complexity of this child?

Obviously, if this was a child, all of the above would be illegal. But with the scientific evidence, how can we justify that it is okay to do this to a parrot? All justification aside, scientific evidence suggests the necessity of early socialization in parrot babies (Linden 8-77). This is essential to their sense of security, trust and curiosity. Without this socialization, their pet potential is vastly compromised. It is very possible that they could become biting, feather destroying, self-mutilating, neurotic, screaming individuals.

Not only are parrots complex in the emotional and mental compactly, but they are also very complex in their housing, handling, feeding and general care. Parrots are not domesticated animals. Parrots were not meant to live in our homes. Many and most products that we use in our homes are toxic to parrots. Virtually anything with a scent is poisonous to some degree to parrots. Some examples are air fresheners, candles, Teflon non-stick cookware, zinc, any form of spray, paint, and glue. Parrots have to be handled securely and confidently. They cannot be disciplined and can only be positively reinforced. Their diet is extensive, but in general they need 50% fresh fruits and vegetables, up to 20% protein, 15-20% whole grains, 10% carbohydrates, and 5-10% seed with organically formulated pellets (Blanchard). Because of their sensitivity to pollutants, preservatives and pesticides, all of the above foods should be organic and unfortified. A person owning a parrot should plan an hour every day for cleaning. They are biologically designed to make an abundant mess. In the wild, this mess would aid the ecological system by germinating the foods they were eating. In order to keep them healthy, their areas must be cleaned thoroughly every day. Most parrots are canopy dwellers in the wild and would never come into contact with their own feces and so abundant cleaning is absolutely necessary. The time commitment needed to care for a parrot could possibly discourage you from wanting a parrot if you were a potential parrot owner. Obviously, Petsmart is not giving this type of information to potential buyers because the majority of them would not buy a parrot.

I have visited Petsmart on a number of occasions and the conditions are, at best, poor. One particular occasion, a baby Amazon parrot was being placed in a cage and the young female employee could not understand why the little guy would not get off of her. She finally pried his little talons from her hand, and he proceeded to cling to the cage bars. There was a small tree type perch in his cage, a perch that was designed for a finch, not a large bird. He could not grip the branches: they were much too small. He had no other option but to cling to

the side of the cage. His food and water bowls were on the floor of the cage covered in feces. This is only one example of the ignorance and improper care at Petsmart. The worst part is, if the staff is ignorant, then the potential owner will not receive adequate guidance in the proper care of his/her new parrot, and essentially, the poor parrot will be doomed.

Kaytee's role in this program is another very important element. Kaytee manufactures all of the bird feed available at Petsmart. While not all of Kaytee's products are bad, a large number of these products are. The majority of their pellets are full of preservatives and artificial coloring. Possibly, a lot of health problems and unexplained behavior can result from a diet of preservatives and artificial coloring. One particular mix made by Kaytee is especially designed for the Eclectus parrot. However, it is documented to cause neurotic reactions in a lot of Eclectus parrots. These reactions are commonly called toe tapping and wing flipping. It is known to cause one or both of these reactions (Swisegood). If these conditions were left untreated and the diet unchanged, the parrot could self-mutilate. I suspect that Petsmart is not warning the potential parrot owner that Kaytee's products could cause health and behavioral problems in the young parrot.

The only real, ethical solution is for Petsmart to stop selling parrots. There should be no compromise in this issue. I realize that this means a large loss in profit for them, but it is the only ethical thing to do. Petsmart can increase profits in other ways and not at the cost of the parrots' well-being. They could sell healthy, parrot-related, organic, human-grade food for parrots. They could stock their shelves with interesting toys and trick-training material. They could sell videos and reading material related to parrots. They could help the species by giving classes on the honest approach to parrot ownership. It is my opinion that most people would not buy a parrot if they knew what they were getting into.

Up until 1992, when it became illegal to import parrots into the United States, we stole them from their homes. We took them from the lush canopy of the rainforest and put them in cages. We did this with such disrespect and ignorance that only one in five parrots captured made it alive to their destination (Sperring). The least that we could do today is to make sure that they have all the necessary provisions to live as complete a life as possible in captivity. Petsmart is unable to provide complete provisions in any sense. Their motivations are in the wrong place and animals of any species should never be a bottom line. They are our kindred spirits and should be treated as such.

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Phoenix Rzetelny
Prozac: America's "Soma"?

In the classic novel, *Brave New World*, the character Bernard Marx explains, "I'd rather be myself. Myself and nasty. Not somebody else, however jolly" (qtd. in Thompson 348). However, he is exposed to a society intent on achieving complete happiness and perfection in humankind. Characters in Huxley's novel, when feeling upset, insecure, or any other emotion besides happiness, take a drug called "soma." The drug alters their senses and, as a result, creates a false sense of reality and well-being. Marx disagrees with such measures and refuses to accept the drug, which has become essential to his society.

Despite the fact that Huxley's novel is a work of fiction, it has in many ways become a reality. Today, our society relies on its own forms of "soma" to ease troubled minds. Among them is fluoxetine hydrochloride, better known as Prozac. Since 1988, it has been marketed in more than ninety countries and is used worldwide by more than 40 million people. Such widespread use has created both support and opposition regarding Prozac (*Welcome to Prozac.com*).

Prozac, among the class of drugs called selective serotonin reuptake inhibitors (SSRIs), increases the availability of serotonin in the brain. Serotonin is believed to affect many types of brain activities including the regulation of mood. To those who think like Marx, the idea of altering brain chemistry to escape reality is unacceptable. Many feel Prozac and other antidepressants are not the answer to treating depression and similar mental disorders. Lilly, the manufacturer of Prozac, has undergone numerous lawsuits since the drug has been on the market. Cases of murder and suicide have been blamed on Prozac, creating the so-called "dark-side" of the drug. Several side effects experienced by patients on the drug also don't work in its favor. In some instances, the effects of the drug even worsened the patient's condition (Thompson 348).

While some say those suffering from depression are better off without their "soma," others disagree. Although it seems that Prozac is used to escape reality, it is actually more vital and essential to some people than it is thought to be. Unlike "soma," it doesn't keep people from experiencing reality; in a way, it brings them back to reality. Those with depression already have an altered sense. Even they realize that they are sad or frantic for no particular reason. Once an actual reason for them to be nervous or upset occurs, it severely

magnifies their feelings. Such an incident or repeated incidents could result in devastating consequences such as suicide. For these reasons, doctors often direct patients who are depressed to take antidepressants such as Prozac. Yes, it chemically alters their mind, but perhaps in many cases it is a beneficial alteration (Thompson 354). On average, two out of every three people with depression respond successfully to antidepressants. This indicates that the success of the drug prevails over its failure.

Whether Prozac will help symptoms of depression or not depends strictly on the individual. There are those with depression who feel negatively about Prozac and other antidepressants. Even after being told such drugs may help, they still refuse to take them. The idea of altering their personality or brain may not appeal to them. Or, in another case, they may feel that the fact that they take drugs for their symptoms represents weakness and instability on their part. Although these people are supposedly refusing to help themselves, it is however an honorable choice for them to make. Should they choose to take antidepressants however, society should not think any less of them. If it is what is needed and benefits them, it would be a wise choice to take the drug.

Only the patients taking Prozac know the truth about the effects of the drug first-hand. Barb, a forty-two-year-old woman, was diagnosed with depression several years ago. She has taken Prozac, among other antidepressants, for the past 11 years, up until six months ago. The first question I asked was what was her reason for quitting. She said she had no problem with the drug, but she "felt better and decided to do it herself." I then asked if Prozac made her feel better when she took it and if she experienced any side effects. She said it did make a positive difference when she took it, but she had side effects such as headaches and irritability. One of the main points she felt strongest about was the fact that Prozac and other antidepressants are "being given out too easily." Her final comment related to an individual's need for Prozac. She commented that many people don't need it or get help from it, but "there are some who it makes a big difference for; it all depends on the individual."

One individual for whom Prozac made a remarkable difference is Tracy Thompson, a writer for the *Washington Post*. In December of 1993, her article, "The Wizard of Prozac," appeared in the *Washington Post National Weekly*. In her article, she gives a personal account of dealing with depression, her love for Prozac, and her trip to meet the creators of the drug. What is most

shocking is the discovery of the fact that the motivation to create Prozac was not to help others. As Molloy, one of the creators explained, "It looked like scientific fun." Thompson writes in response, "Reality is rarely what we imagine...Great and noble things do not always happen for great and noble reasons" (Thompson 355).

Although Prozac may have been created out of "scientific fun" and alters brain chemistry, many find it to be a source of relief, happiness, and satisfaction. Its distribution and usage is continuing to increase and more people are finding it a solution. Fighting a battle to change one's mind is one of the hardest tasks in existence, especially if that mind is our own. For some people with depression, Prozac aids in that battle.

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Denis A. Rogers

Who Does Circumstantial Euthanasia Harm?

Throughout history, the profession of medicine has continued to progress with relatively new ideas. Many practices that are part of research development, such as organ transplants, stem-cell research, and disease and virus control/development, have now advanced into more controversial issues. Still, there is one medical field that has been around since the earliest of times, yet it is still considered medically unethical and illegal in forty-nine of the fifty states in America. The field that I am referring to is euthanasia. According to the *Concise Columbia Encyclopedia*, the practice of euthanasia is defined as, "either painlessly putting to death (positive euthanasia) or failing to postpone death from natural causes (negative euthanasia) in cases of terminal illness" ("Euthanasia").

In the 1990s, acts of euthanasia started a controversy because of the publicity of Jack Kevorkian (Dr. Death) and his inappropriate practices of euthanasia, and even though I do not believe that the practices of Jack Kevorkian were proper, I do believe in certain forms of circumstantial euthanasia. I also believe that circumstantial euthanasia needs to be evaluated and regulated very carefully, with each individual case being reviewed and considered by the individual circumstance, instead of the government's steadfast ruling against the very concept. With circumstantial euthanasia, I believe an individual's wish to die, when suffering from a terminal illness, should be decided by American society.

A lot of the controversy that surrounds euthanasia pertains to the morals and ethics that are involved in the medical community and American society. In America today, the greatest public qualm pertaining to euthanasia is the moral aspects of helping another individual take his/her own life. The government and the church have tried to instill a sense of sanctity over the human body to the extent that society now believes that helping someone to end his/her life is an immoral crime, even if the individual is suffering greatly from a terminal illness. This, in turn, has inspired many critics to protest against legalizing euthanasia, but it has also brought out a great majority of Americans who believe that euthanasia should be legalized.

Currently, only one state in America has breached the controversial aspects

of euthanasia and now carries a Death with Dignity Act in the state legislature. Oregon's Death with Dignity Act was the first piece of legislation for circumstantial euthanasia: "approved in 1994 and then reaffirmed by Oregon voters in 1997, the law allows a doctor to prescribe a lethal dose of barbiturates to patients who have less than six months to live" (Cain A4). According to Brad Cain, a journalist for the *South Bend Tribune*, only twenty-seven patients have used the Death with Dignity Act to end their lives since the Act was reaffirmed in 1997, and all of these patients were terminally ill from a form of cancer, AIDS, or Lou Gehrig's disease (A4). All of the patients who were prescribed the lethal dose of barbiturates were also within or close to the specified time (six months) of death before they received their prescription.

At present, the federal government, under the new U.S. Attorney General John Ashcroft, has "dealt what could be a fatal blow to the country's only law permitting assisted suicide by serving notice on Oregon's doctors that their license to prescribe federally controlled drugs will be revoked if they participate in Oregon's Death with Dignity law ("Oregon Sues" A9). What this appears to be is another instance whereby the American government and all of its support groups have put up a wall to stop any type of legal euthanasia. Even though Oregon has passed the proper legislation for a Death with Dignity Act, the federal government has stepped in and put a ban on the federally regulated barbiturates that are prescribed to the patients under the Death with Dignity Act. This means that doctors who continue to prescribe the deadly barbiturates for the purpose of euthanasia, even though they are licensed to do so, will have their licenses revoked and will be banned from prescribing any federally regulated medication. This is the American government's illogical way of regulating a controversial law that a certain minority of society deems inappropriate.

An article in *Time* magazine states, "polls show that up to 75% of Americans back mercy killing" (Cohen 46), yet the government and the American Medical Association (AMA) have not come to an agreement on the aspects and conditions of legislation that would establish rules for right-to-die laws in all fifty states. While it appears that a great majority of Americans agree that euthanasia should be legalized in some form, only Oregon has been successful with this attempt, until present day. Numerous other states have tried to get legislation passed by the voters, but have been unsuccessful. For instance, in November 1991, Washington state voters defeated referendums that would legalize

euthanasia, yet "44% of the voters supported it" ("Ethics"). Michigan's legislature rejected an assisted suicide initiative "by a landslide of 71% to 29%" (Cohen 47), and California could not get similar referendums passed in the early 1990s ("Ethics"). Apparently, many states are trying to get right-to-die legislation passed, but all proposals continue to be rejected in the voting process.

The government and the medical community continue to rule against all forms of euthanasia, but "a number of states have 'living will' statutes that set out a procedure for a mentally competent person to declare that he/she does not wish to be subjected to a 'death prolonging' procedure" ("Ethics"). What this statute actually states is that individuals who are in a vegetative state, who are on a life support system, and who have specified on a previous date to have all life support disengaged from the body must be allowed to die. This statute does nothing for the individuals who are still alive and feeling his/her own body dying; it only terminates a life that needs to be kept alive by continuous medical treatment. In fact, "in March of 1986, the American Medical Association (AMA) announced that it would be ethical for doctors to withhold 'all means of life prolonging medical treatment, including food and water, from permanently unconscious patients even if death was not imminent'" ("Ethics"). This statute is actually telling doctors that it is all right to let a patient, who is in a vegetative state, starve or dehydrate from the lack of necessities, but the doctors are not to induce death. The same medical association (AMA) and the same government (American) who oppose any form of euthanasia justify letting an individual dehydrate or starve to death, "even if death was not imminent" ("Ethics"). Our government appears to be scared of the power that a national Death with Dignity Act would give the medical community. What our society needs to see is the power that the government and the AMA already have over individuals who need health-care. Eyes need to be opened as to what types of solutions there are to rectify laws for circumstantial euthanasia, because the sole purpose of health-care is supposed to help those in need, but keeping alive an individual who has no life of value, or letting an individual lie in a bed and dehydrate until the body no longer functions and dies is not considered helping anyone, not by actual medical standards.

With every law that is passed, there is certain liability and an undetermined outcome in the regulation process. With proper training and education in the medical profession, doctors would be able to help those who could benefit from the relief that a circumstantial euthanasia law would enforce.

From information in *Compton's Interactive Encyclopedia*, I've researched an article on Hippocrates, who is often associated with the Hippocratic Oath which "set[s] forth the obligations, ideals, and ethics of physicians" ("Hippocrates"). Some of the exact wording of the Hippocratic Oath is, "I will prescribe regimen for the good of my patients according to my ability and my judgment and never do harm to anyone. To please no one will I prescribe a deadly drug, nor give my advice which may cause his death" ("Hippocratic Oath"). Following this oath, many doctors have been sworn to uphold the best interests of the patients they are treating; but from my research, I have found that the majority of people who oppose any type of euthanasia refer to the Hippocratic Oath and give the words "never do harm to anyone" as their main argument. Yet, if a patient were terminally ill, then how would keeping the patient alive and forcing him/her to endure the pain of his/her final days be considered "never [doing] harm to anyone" ("Hippocratic Oath")?

According to author Charles Chaput, the Hippocratic Oath was established because "doctors wield enormous power over their patient. And that power quickly corrupts the profession unless it is rigorously held in check" (230). Then author Arthur Rifkin argues that "the spirit of the Hippocratic Oath says the physician should be devoted to the patient's interests" (226). So how can letting a patient wither and dehydrate from the lack of a feeding tube be considered moral? If this is how doctors act in the patient's best interest, why wouldn't helping a terminally ill individual who wishes to end his/her life be considered in the best interest of the patient? It appears that the true meaning of the Hippocratic Oath lies in the view of the person interpreting it.

In the essay, "Assisted Suicide Is An Immoral Response to Dying," Charles Chaput states, "Six thousand years of Judeo-Christian wisdom show that suffering can be—and often is—redemptive, both for the person who suffers and for the family and friends of the one in need" (230). Should this be considered a moral solution to letting anyone die? The truth is, allowing one to suffer is practiced throughout America everyday. An individual who has a terminal illness and is in the last few weeks or months of his/her life should be able to put a stop to any suffering that he/she may be going through, providing that the individual is competent. This would be a moral solution, but Chaput goes on to state, "Modern pain-suppression drugs can ensure the comfort of persons even in the final stages of dying. Hospice care, focused on ensuring a natural death with comfort and dignity, is increasingly available" (230). Do modern pain-

suppression drugs make the suffering before death as comfortable as possible and also make death a natural death? Is spending the last days of one's life drugged up considered to be a natural death? Is this the answer for keeping circumstantial euthanasia illegal? It is in America, but I assure you from my own family experience that all the painkillers in the world cannot end the mental suffering and the pain of a dying individual and his/her family. It is also the furthest from what a natural death should be considered. In my experience, the patient, my aunt, was delusional and had no life of value in the final days before her death.

On August 16, 2001, my aunt passed away from a terminal lung disease; but before her death, she suffered a great deal as the final days of her life came to an end. At this time my aunt was in my mother's care, and I was informed on the daily events that led up to her death on August 16. For two years, my mother took care of my aunt with the help of twice a week Hospice Care (in-home nursing). For the last year of my aunt's life, she was bed-ridden to the point that she had to be picked up out of bed to go to the bathroom. She had to be given a sponge bath every day because it was impossible for her to bathe herself. She sat out the majority of her days with an air mask on her face just so she could breathe. My aunt was on the maximum strength pain medication available by the time she took her last breath on that early August morning. During all of this, my mother took care of her every day, while the whole family watched the daily deterioration of my aunt's health and body. The only thing that was established as her medical right was a living will. This stated that she had the right not to be resuscitated if she stopped breathing. All of the pain and suffering that she endured in the final days and weeks of her life could have been alleviated if she would have had the choice of ending her suffering, but this was not a legal option because Indiana is one of the forty-nine states that does not have any kind of right-to-die laws.

I am not alone in my view to establish a circumstantial euthanasia act. As I mentioned previously, "polls show that up to 75% of Americans back mercy killing" (Cohen 46), so what is the actual harm of passing a right-to-die law? Why hasn't the government taken action to address this issue? Is it the regulatory issues, moral issues, or is it the legal issues? I actually believe that any issue, presented in an argumentative manner whether it is a moral, regulatory or legal issue, will always be in debate. What the American government and people need to look at are the individual cases and sad experiences of those

who have suffered physically everyday because there was no legislation that could grant the relief that death can bring. These past cases could be the foundation for new legislative acts to be affirmed and put into law. But our society needs to bring this controversy to a positive conclusion soon, because many Americans suffering everyday from terminal illness could benefit from a national circumstantial euthanasia law.

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Shellie Higgins
Sentient Creatures

It is considered scientifically unsound to even contemplate whether animals think and have feelings (Rogers 7). Attributing human-like characteristics to animals, known as anthropomorphism, is considered scientific taboo.

Descartes, the seventeenth-century French philosopher, believed animals to be automatic machines. An unknown contemporary of Descartes put this position starkly:

The scientists administered beatings to the dogs with perfect indifference and made fun of those who pitied the creatures as if they felt pain. They said the animals were clocks; that the cries they emitted when struck were only the noise of a little spring that had been touched, but that the whole body was without feeling. They nailed the poor animals up on boards by their four paws to vivisect them to see the circulation of the blood. (qtd. in Masson and McCarthy 18)

Has nature arranged for animals to have all that is necessary for intelligence and feelings in order for it to be absent? Has it arranged for them to cry out seemingly in pain when they are not? Has it designed dogs to wag their tails happily without experiencing joy?

Even when an animal speaks our language, science is fearfully unwilling to accept that they are experiencing cognitive thought. Psychologist Irene Pepperberg, who has spent the last twenty years studying the cognitive abilities of the african gray parrot, has proof to the cognitive abilities of one parrot, Alex. Alex is able to identify and name fifty objects, seven colors and five shapes. He can determine what is same and what is different. He can not only demonstrate what is similar or different, but he can also understand the more abstract concept of what is not there. If that is not proof enough, while Alex was being used as a tutor for another parrot of Pepperberg's research, he ordered the spluttering Griffen to "Talk clearly" a phrase that he has probably heard but never been prompted to learn (Caldwell 2-4).

Evidence of animal intelligence surrounds us. Kanzi, a bonobo at the Yerkes Priginal Primate Research Center in Atlanta, appears to understand the syntax of human language. If he is given the following instruction in pidgin English, "Go get orange testing room" he will respond by going to get the orange, but he

responds more rapidly when the command is given in the syntactically correct form, "Go and get the orange from the testing room" (Rogers 174). Bridget, a gorilla that resides at the Columbus zoo was nursing her newborn baby when zookeeper, Charlene, passed by. Charlene noticed that the baby was nursing sloppily and said unthinkingly to Bridget, "That kid's got milk all over his face. Bring him over here and I will wipe it off." Without any hesitation, Bridget brought the baby over to the bars and pushed his face up for Charlene to wash it (Linden 10).

Orky, an orca at Marineland in California, fathered a baby in the late 1970s. After about two weeks, the baby became ill and needed to be removed from the tank for emergency care. The zookeepers, attempting to not disturb Orky and his mate, Corky, decided to move the baby onto a stretcher instead of the traditional way of lowering the water in the tank. When it came time to place the baby back into the tank the stretcher halted too far above the water to place the baby back in. As if that didn't generate enough of a problem the baby began to vomit. The situation became desperate as the potential for the baby to aspirate and die was immense. Orky, who had been watching the procedure, acted on the problem by swimming under the stretcher and encouraging one of the men to stand on his head. This was a stunt that had never been taught to Orky. It appeared as though he acted on his assessment of the problem. He balanced the keeper on his head so that the keeper could reach the bridle that released the baby back into the tank. Once into the tank, Orky swam away and watched the keepers continue care on his baby. Orky observing the keepers care for his young in itself is remarkable, as orcas can be ferociously protective of their offspring (Linden 104-105).

In my own experience with animals, I cannot deny their intelligence. Even while writing this paper I am astonished as to the aptitude of my new rescue dog, Molly. Molly is nothing less than an adorable mutt. She has spent the last year of her life in a kennel but despite her incarceration, she is very keen. While outside impatiently waiting for me to let her back in, I hear a few faint barks. I am fastidiously working on my paper and will not be disturbed by a barking dog. Molly, fully aware of what room I am in, suddenly appears at the window where I am working. "Bark, bark!" If she could speak she would most definitely be chastising me for not coming to her aid more rapidly.

Can we dispute Descartes' theory that animals have no feelings? Arthur and Jenny, two peregrine falcons that busily fed their nestlings high in the Rocky

Mountains, were observed by biologist Marcy Houle. Each day they would leave to hunt for food and would return to the nest. One morning Jenny did not return. Arthur, appearing disappointed, waited by the nest repeatedly calling out for Jenny. Jenny did not respond. By the third day Houle states, "Arthur uttered an unfamiliar sound, a cry like the screeching moan of a wounded animal, the cry of a creature in suffering. The sadness in the outcry was unmistakable; having heard it, I will never doubt that an animal can suffer emotions that we humans think belong to our species alone" (qtd. in Masson and McCarthy 91).

George Lewis, an elephant trainer, describes Sadie, an extremely emotional elephant. She was a young timid female who had a difficult time trying to learn the acts in the rapid fashion they were being taught. One day, unable to understand what she was being told to do, she ran out of the ring. She was brought back into the ring and was punished for being so stupid. (This punishment was probably in the form of being hit on the head by a stick.) To the complete astonishment of Lewis, Sadie began to utter agonizing sobs and tears poured from her eyes (Masson and McCarthy 107).

Do animals feel joy? The meeting of two related groups of elephants best describes sheer ecstasy. From a quarter mile away they will begin to call to one another, and, charging faster and faster with ears out and head up, tears stream out of their temporal glands. As they view each other, they begin to scream and trumpet with delight. The final meeting is encountered with clicking tusks, flapping ears, and trunks intertwined. As an observer, Moss writes: "I have no doubt even in my most scientifically rigorous moments that the elephants are experiencing joy when they find each other again. It may not be similar to human joy or even comparable, but it is elephantine joy" (qtd. in Masson and McCarthy 116).

Play, the ultimate source of joy for many beings, can be observed in Alaskan buffalo on the ice. One at a time, starting from the ridge above a frozen lake, the buffalo charge down the mountain and slide onto the ice. With tails in the air they brace their legs in a manner conducive to spinning across the lake. As each buffalo skids to a halt, it lets out a loud bellow and then excitedly climbs its way back up to the ridge to make another run (Masson and McCarthy 126).

Anyone who has owned a pet knows his or her animal experiences feelings. Allen Schoen, veterinarian and author of *Kindred Spirits*, talks about his counterpart, Megan, a golden retriever: "I have a degree in veterinary medicine, and my understanding of the healing process comes through Western science.

But Megan understands how to heal with love" (7).

Why does everyone but scientists so readily accept feelings and intelligence? To accuse a scientist of anthropomorphism is to make a severe criticism of unreliability. It is regarded as a species-confusion, forgetting the line between subject and object. The situation is not so much that cognition and emotion is denied but that it is regarded as too dangerous of a subject to study. Thus, many scientists may actually believe that animals can think cognitively and have emotions, but be unwilling to admit it. An administrator at one internationally known animal training institute remarked, "We don't take a position on whether animals have emotions, but I'm sure if you talked to any one of us we'd say, 'Sure they have emotions.' But as an organization we would not want to be depicted as saying they have emotions" (qtd. in Masson and McCarthy 34).

I find it extremely disheartening that it is out of fear of being ridiculed that scientists will not admit the obvious. I wonder if mankind is afraid of having to take responsibility for exploiting animals; if animals have no feelings than we do not have to feel badly that we are using them to our advantage. If animals cannot think, then we are still the superior species.

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Danielle Weinhold

A Verse of Freedom (One Way Conversation)

There, you sit
Soft-spoken idioms
Soft cheeks set curving
By the length of brown falling
In the face you save
For the world

Here, I tangle
Thin limbs around
Thin words bent scrawling
Even without any ink to stain
Within what I give
To no one

This killing time is killing me
When youth presents us with the opportunity
To disregard it completely
When we cannot, for the life in us, stop laughing

Stop laughing
For the sake of the moment
Stop trying to capture it
It ends up anyway
Better not pervert the flow
With such forceful cackling

Better just let it go
With a subtle rhyme here and there
To commune the sense that sometimes
You can stumble on such synchronicity
Turning up the music in the midst of diversity
And see heads swaying, toes tapping

Maybe even dancing
My head aching in time with the song I sing

Or a rarity,
Words rushing your skin
Like a blushing embarrassment
Agreeing that there is something tonight
That cannot be defined
As the nothing between us

Kimberly Wiseman
The Goldfish

Pete was the bleached-blonde with a sweet serpent's smile, no declared major, and rich parents somewhere upstate. His sky-blue eyes always smoldered, dully electric, either from pot, booze, cocaine, or a combination of the three. Pete never went anywhere empty-handed. He financed kegs and made runs for underagers. At his height, Pete Hampton presided over every darkened room and puking freshman: a bloodshot beacon in the corner, with a halo of dusty blue neon.

I met him at a party freshman week. Having lost a shot contest, I lay sprawled across a stained blue couch.

"Drink up, boy, and be a man!"

Pete stuffed a Red Dog in my right hand and flopped down next to me, holding a bottle of Jack Daniels. I stared at the beer I held, mumbling thickly and trying to hand it back to my blonde benefactor.

"I don't... uh..."

"Stick to what you do best, kid," he said with authority. He took a gulp of his whiskey, then twisted the lid off my beer. "And also, never say no."

He winked at me, swallowing half the beer in a single drink.

"And don't worry if you can't keep up," he confided, then belched. "I'm a professional, after all."

Pete sat back, his eyes glazed with something heavier than liquor alone. His eyes softened, widened, and his face went slack and boyish.

"Yep. I'm a professional." He nodded solemnly. "Five years' training..." I looked on, waiting.

Sure enough, with a buoyant, lyrical laugh, the old Pete returned, triumphantly red-eyed and alive as ever. And he leapt from the couch—smacking the back of my head on the way—to go play darts.

I first noticed the fish on my third or fourth visit to Pete's place. It was something not everyone saw; probably dozens of inebriated roommates and innocents had passed through Pete's apartment without so much as a glance at the dusty water-filled bottle. It happened as the setting sun spilt through Pete's black blinds and cut a strip of light across his desk: Suddenly a flash of orange fire caught my eye. Disbelieving, I peered closely at the bottle, mouth ajar. Does

Pete know this is here? I wondered. A fish, a real live fish—I tapped the bottle, tried to get its attention. Oblivious, the goldfish danced, circling, bright vermilion, like a drop of thick paint suspended in the glass.

One August night around two a.m. we were at another party. I stood by the stereo, flipping through CDs, looking for something familiar. Suddenly Pete shook my shoulder, told me he was tired. I gawked at him, bewildered. He smiled weakly, tossing aside his plastic cup, and threw his heavy arm around my shoulder.

"C'mon," he said, "Walk me home?"

I couldn't grasp that he actually wanted to leave—the keg was not yet empty, and it wasn't light out. Pete, in fact, looked oddly vibrant in the blacklit din, despite the greasy purple smudges beneath his sky-blue eyes.

I followed my friend of four long years down the uneven sidewalk of Stadium Avenue. With the long strides of an expert he navigated the potholes and chunks of graying dandelions. The night was quiet, lit only by a few high, cool streetlamps. I breathed deeply; soon I would graduate, and leave this place. From somewhere on campus a lone frog croaked: a broken, summertime rhythm. Pete stumbled on a cement slab in front of me and muttered, cursing to himself.

At his apartment Pete kicked through the dirty pullovers and tennis shoes piled around his bed, muttering. He had misplaced a lighter and left another at the abandoned party. Though tired, Pete needed one last smoke before bed.

"If I hadn't quit, I'd give you mine," I told him, casually avoiding eye contact. I bent and stared at his goldfish-in-the-bottle, leaning in until my reflection blurred and slipped from the glass, and only the round, open eyes and panicked iridescence of the living gold inside remained.

The next night, Pete was muttering again, flinging clothes from his roommate's dresser. His roommate Rick had found out that he would graduate, with honors, come August; also, he'd proposed to his girlfriend, and they'd set a date. Unfortunately, the engagement party was black-tie. Pete would have to step outside the beer-stained, concert-worn limits of his meager wardrobe. This posed a problem.

"I can't find anything clean," he slurred, his voice thick with hangover. "What the hell did I wear to that one chick's wedding?"

"Oh, Sheila's wedding?" I asked, looking at the ever-present goldfish. "That suit you wore — rented. Remember?"

"Fuck," he agreed, without moving his lips.

The fish had meanwhile drifted up near the neck of the bottle; two bubbles escaped from its round white mouth. It staggered back down a little, then bobbed back up to the surface of the dull old water.

"Hey, man, your fish is dying," I called.

"What? Nah," Pete yelled from inside a closet. "It's okay. Just shake the bottle. He'll wake up."

"Maybe you shouldn't keep your pets in beer bottles," I said, lifting the bottle, and swirled the water.

Why not? They keep those fancy ones in jars! Have you seen that? All that breeding, all those bright blue and red fish... in tiny little..." Pete sniffed the armpit of a yellowed shirt and dropped it. "Jars... And that one's just a crappy little goldfish — a carp."

I watched the comet circle up, pause, nibble at the surface: two little bubbles, down again. I glanced at Pete. Would he notice if the fish were gone? If I took it, saved it, let it go somewhere with space and water that didn't smell of stale beer?

Pete emerged in his roommate's immaculate Garth Brooks T-shirt: a symbol of defeat. His face was slack, blank and white.

"C'mon, let's go." He gathered a coat and keys.

I thought frantically. I didn't have a fish tank, but there was that pond on campus...

Pete suddenly stopped, ran a hand through his white-blond hair. He turned, stooped into the tiny bathroom and locked the door. My stomach turned: cocaine or speed—I hated when he hit that stuff. He'd come out glowing; it was what came after that glow, that brief spark that I dreaded.

I stared at the fish in its bottle. Its eyes held life, but its body remained tilting at the surface, unsteadily turning its scales up out of the water, dull to the dry light.

"Ready yet?" I called.

"Yeah, yeah, hang on."

I grabbed the neck of the bottle. The water swished and rocked the fish, despite the sudden panic of its fins. I gave the unblinking slip of gold foil one last look and stuck its bottle in my jacket pocket.

Pete strode out across the hampers' worth of clothes that hid his floor, alive again, swinging wide the blue door with its broken bolt, and we were out. In

silence we went down the stairs, across the street, and through the electric fog of midnight.

"This way, man, it's faster," I called, cutting across a wet sidewalk. The fish pond would be right on the way.

Pete snuffed and wiped a smear of blood across the flat white back of his hand; he patted his pants pockets and produced a pack of matches, no cigarettes.

"Hey, I'm gonna buy some smokes." He smacked my arm and headed toward the distant neon of the pharmacy. The fog muffled his footsteps; soon he was gone.

I turned and pushed through a wet hedgerow. One frog cried out inside its gates. Here was Memorial Pond: a new home, a new start for Pete's goldfish. I edged the sticky beer bottle from the denim grip of my pocket and held it out. Holding my breath, I spilled its water into the oilslick black of the pond. The frog faltered, fell silent. I felt the bottle grow lighter in my hand as it glugged out into the darkness; then it was empty. I threw it aside.

"Hey," Pete called, back from the store. Cigarette smoke burned its smell into the night as he shoved through the bushes.

I stared down, unblinking. There, floating like a scrap of foil on the waves, was the goldfish. The water held it up, gloating, a new orange gleam in its eye. I shivered. Pete took a drag on his cigarette, its end burning bright in the night.

"What's that?" he asked indifferently, pointing at the lifeless sliver of moonlight on the water.

I shrugged. "A dead... carp, I guess."

We walked on, growing cold, as the frog resumed its stumbling, shattered song.

Kelly Gang
Silence and Room 142

The lock clicks and I hear the door-knob twist slowly. I hear his footsteps and slowness of the closing of the door; the intentional quietness folds in with the hour. I've been up for at least two hours, waiting, padding back and forth looking at my children sleeping, desperately staring out the window in hopes of seeing the flash of headlights making their way down the road and into my driveway. My heart beats rapidly knowing he's home; it's either ready for a fight or it's thrilled he's finally here. I lie still, trying to figure out which one it is tonight.

The refrigerator door opens and then a pause. The crinkle of the cellophane being wadded up breaks the space of silence and then the microwave door opens and it beeps with the time. Silverware clinks on the plate as he eats the dinner I prepared, the same dinner I made for our children, the same dinner I choked down, one eye on them, one eye on the clock. By 7 PM I assumed he wasn't coming. I answered the questions the children asked.

"When is Daddy coming home? Will he be here for dinner?"

"Will he be here before I go to bed? He promised we'd have fight night tonight."

"Daddy had a meeting I'm sure. He'd rather be with us but he needs to make money."

"Daddy's meeting had to run over. He's dealing with some very difficult customers right now, but I'm sure he'll have fight night tomorrow."

I finish off the dishes as I fire off the answers to their questions. I carefully tear off the plastic wrap and put it over his plate, making the plastic tight, suffocating.

I give the children their baths, read them a story and give kisses and hugs. They struggle going to sleep, always wanting glasses of water, an extra story. It makes my nerves brittle, this hour of bedtime. After they're asleep and my chores are done, I'm afraid. I'm alone, I'm afraid and I sit and listen to the silence of the house. There's no footsteps, there's no heart. There's only the slight hum of the furnace and the occasional car passing by, never pulling in but passing by. The silence is deafening as I walk from room to room, thinking up things to do. Finally I give in and escape to my bedroom, to the ritual of falling

asleep for a few draining hours only to wake up to the inevitable. An empty bed. An empty house. An empty marriage.

In the early dawn light, I see the shadow of what was once my husband. I watch his lips pull in and out with the stale booze and cigarette breath. It encompasses the room and I want to fling open the windows despite the 30-degree weather to banish the staleness of his body. I quietly get dressed to walk. To walk away from my house. To use a small space and time to call my own. To cleanse myself from my drunken husband inside and the innocent children lying in their beds. To fill my lungs with something clean and full of life. Not the staleness of life itself. Somehow to try to figure out through the silence of the woods the answers to save him, to save myself, to save my children from us all.

I carefully meander down my road, veering left to take the trails through the woods I've carved out on mornings such as this. The snow is beaten down, shiny with ice in patches from the rising sun. I shove my gloved hands deep in my pockets and my thoughts shove down deeper in my brain. I imagine my husband last night, at the bar, with his friends, and in my imagination with his girlfriend. The girlfriend who moved away and left town. The girlfriend who meant nothing other than a good sexual partner. The girlfriend who laid down in her bed with my husband and then sent him home to his wife and children. Did she know that after he came home he would wrap me in his arms and whisper "that's my girl, that's my baby?" Did she know he would hold me without conscience in his arms and tell me how much he adores me, how his world is lost without me, how there's nobody like me?

Tears stream down my face and freeze from the cold air. My nose runs and I keep taking a gloved hand to wipe the mess. It's disgusting and I'd yell at my children for the same act. My mind whirls with a range of thoughts, with pictures of other women and it churns for something substantial to hang onto. It whirls with anger and self hatred. It whirls with hysteria and the words COWARD, COWARD, COWARD, ENABLER, ENABLER, ENABLER. I crush my hands over my ears to stop the accusations. I crush my hands over my ears to stop my mind. I crush my hands over my ears over my eyes over my soul to stop the pictures. I fall down into the snow and stare up at the sky and remember the girl I was, now the woman I am. Fallen, beaten, devoured, hungry, and lost. My anger is directed at me, not him, not her, not friends, not the bar. It is me who is a shell. It is me not living the life meant to live. It is me who is losing this battle

for self and it is me who lacks courage.

I struggle for a place of aloneness other than the aloneness in my house. I long for the choice to be alone, away from responsibilities, away from the feeling something always has to be done. I struggle for courage to do what I have to do to feel proud, worthy, fulfilled. So I can stop the distance and detachment from my children and welcome them with open arms, not a forced smile and empty eyes.

And I take it. I take my aloneness with nothing but an empty notebook on a Monday morning after his binge at the bar. With sheets of paper, a blue ink pen, a paperback and my purse, I check into room 142 and I sit on the polyester bedspread. It is slick and the blue and green and beige swirls make me dizzy. I look at the anonymous furniture in the room; I look at the soiled carpet and tacky chairs covered in salmon colored vinyl. I try to imagine all the people in the room before me and I try to picture their faces and their bodies. I try to picture why they came here, who made love on this bed, who worked at this desk, who called home from this telephone. I listen. There is silence again, no heart, no footsteps, but it is okay. This silence does not belong to me, but it is meant to be here. I bought this silence to claim myself, to calm myself, to find myself. At least until 2:30, then it's time for the kids to come home and my role to begin.

First thing I do after sitting on the bed is head to the bathroom. There's a mirror and above the mirror is a fluorescent light. I switch it on and sit on the counter. The artificial light is harsh and I stare at my face. It casts shadows and lines that I never knew were there. It gives my eyes dark haunted circles and makes my mouth grim and my jowls sag. I've never looked older and I move closer to the mirror. I stare into my eyes and I become frightened. I can't grasp if the person staring back is me, if it's an out-of-body experience, or if this is still the little girl who would run and play and jump with friends. Who would laugh and catch fireflies in the dusk of summer nights. Who was a perfect student with great dreams and aspirations. Inside the eyes in which I'm staring I see her, though she's distant. She flashes in and out of the picture, surfacing for a few seconds and then fleeing. Terrified of being seen. She's there though. She's just unsure. Too many years have passed and too many dreams have escaped or been replaced by other's dreams. Roles have reversed and nurturing has overtaken dreams. Ambition has been replaced with survival and love has been replaced by betrayal. A life has been lost by lies, and the dreams that were spun were smooth and fluid, were fine with the sacrifices that had to be made and

there was happiness. But with the twist of knowledge all things changed. The sacrifices were a sacrilege when one can so carelessly, disrespectfully play around. A stranger comes into the house who can never again be a friend, confidante, lover. He's always a stranger.

I leave that day perplexed by strangers and perplexed by the stranger in the mirror.

The days fold in on themselves, and my depression worsens. The depression stems not from his act but from my own acts. My failure to move forward, my failure to make a life for myself and my children, my failure of not being strong and confident. I check back into room 142 after two weeks of loneliness.

I go to the lingerie store to buy beautiful seductive silky things before I check in. I put them on and again analyze my image in the mirror. The mirror I find is forgiving this time; I'm not so close, sitting on the counter. I stare at the woman and what must be wrong. I stare at the curve of her body and find nothing distasteful. I put make-up on and find nothing wrong with her face. I stare at her soul and find destruction and then it finally hits. It's not physical, it's not her fault. I think about wearing the lingerie that night, the make-up that night, but that is distasteful. It's not worthy the sacrifice it entails. It's not worth the glint in his eyes, the okay that he is forgiven. This is for me and room 142 and my \$35.99. I begin to think the money is ridiculous and I have no right to this privilege for just a few hours. Then the silence comes and I claim it because it is not mine. It was bought and still doesn't belong to me. I remember the former, older image of myself in room 142 and the money is well spent. The money is worth my confidence which in turn will spurn my courage which will in turn spurn my life which in turn will spurn my attitude which in turn will spurn my ability to take myself and my children out of this hole. It is not my fault.

The days fold in on themselves, but they are different days. They are spent with smiles and love for my children. They don't care about time or silence. I can buy silence that is welcoming and forgiving and full of retribution. The silence in my house only spurs my resolve and I can sit quietly, planning, forgoing what he is doing, where he is, where he's been and whom he is with. I laugh through my days and nights and finally give in to what it is. It is not my fault. The fault lies within him and my sympathy expounds on his soul, what must be left of it and his conscience. He is without and I worry about his life without room 142 and the dignity he will have to learn to claim.

I check into room 142 again. This time I have no make-up and I have no

lingerie. I check in to stare at the blue and green and beige swirls and they seem so familiar and therapeutic. I sit on the counter in the bathroom with the same harsh fluorescent light and I no longer see imperfections. I find the girl throwing dried leaves to the wind and rolling in the grass with the fresh scent of spring in her nostrils. I find the girl who had life by the tails and without one ounce of trepidation in her step. I find the woman who would sacrifice her life for those she loves enveloped and the image and the lines and the darkness fade away until her bare soul remains. She's not a coward, she's not an enabler. She is courageous, she is strong, and she is determined. His staleness is thrown to the wind and out the window in 30-degree weather. His betrayal is no more, and he has to claim his betrayal for his own. She's moved on. All for \$35.99 and before 2:30.



Shawn Pierce

Amanda Haverstick
Where Liberty Lies

First Class Petty Officer Jack Matrose leaned his white-suited frame against a solitary lamp-post. As he sniffed the smoggy air, a bus roared by him that had the words "Jesus Loves You" painted on its side. Matrose looked up just in time to see one of the girls in the back of the bus salute him with her middle finger. Partly out of duty, and mostly out of disgust, Matrose bounced off of the rusted lamp-post and continued on his trek down the street. Nothing could stain his dress whites, because dirt on dress whites left a permanent stain. Certainly the filth of Pennsylvania Avenue would not be an exception to that rule. As he walked past hobo-inhabited Lafayette Park and onto the White House next door, Matrose decided that the scum of this street could never be swept up.

He thought about his new assignment as he walked to the street corner and waited to cross. As far as the surface of the U.S. Navy was concerned, he had been granted liberty. As far as the inside of the organization was concerned, his three-day leave of absence was nothing more than a convenient lie. He had been blessed, by his commanding officers, with a work order of the classified nature. His falsified vacation ashore was going to be spent testing the security of a new naval intelligence complex. All his job really amounted to, though, was high stakes breaking and entering.

That evening Matrose reviewed his assignment again, but this time in a swanky tavern of fine spirits. Mostly, though, he thought about how he should spend his spare time. From his bar stool perch he could see that the saloon he was in did not sustain much life. The average patron was the bourbon swilling, gray-flannel, desk ape. The only other form of life was a girl sitting alone at the end of the bar. Matrose decided to go with the girl.

"Can I buy you a drink?" he asked, sitting down next to her and flashing her a glowing grin.

"No," she snapped in a vain attempt to ignore him.

"Suit yourself."

He looked her over and decided that she would be worth bickering with. Her faintly flushed face was brushed with innocence. Her auburn locks were like a torch and her blue eyes made him think of the mocking Reflecting Pool. As he thought about what witty remark he should impress her with next, he shifted his

gaze to the fine marble topped bar. He fiddled with his fingers and thought about asking her for a light. Then the perfect words ran to his lips. Just as he was about to speak, he managed to get his twiddling thumbs stuck in a wad of gum on the underside of the bar. The words were gone.

"Don't you have a deck to swab or a pack of potatoes to peel?" she demanded in a huff.

"No," he said in a pride packed tone. "I have liberty!"

"Are you trying to tell me that the Navy'd give a wonderful thing like that to the likes of something like you?"

He responded to this insult with a sorrow-laden look. "This may be my last liberty. I'm shippin' out tomorrow."

She took a sip of her margarita and rewarded his pitiful act with a tired look. "Like I believe that. That's the story of every sailor's life."

Then Matrose heard the voice of the scarlet-vested bartender in his ear. "Why don't you try the old top secret suicide mission line? Lies like that win women all the time."

Matrose turned to the bartender and shot him a crucifying look. Listening to the bartender was like listening to a warped form of his conscience. He decided against this advice.

"Why don't you butt out?" he told the bartender.

"Ah-ha! A secret mission," murmured the girl. "What kind?"

"The kind that's none of your business," he snapped. It had become clear to him that his presence was being made into a mockery. The harmless flirtations that he had hoped for had become nothing more than an argument resembling a squabble between siblings.

"Yeah. Sure. I bet you're just here to pick up girls," she remarked, still trying to agitate him.

"It's a suicide mission," he answered in hot sarcasm. "I'm going to sabotage an admiral's office."

With that information out in the open, and his self-esteem at an all time low, Matrose decided to leave. It was all he could do, except stay in the watering hole and get drunk out of frustration. Considering, though, that his wallet was looking a lot less green on the inside, it was time enough that he preserved what remained of his wasted ego and vacated.

About an hour later, Matrose arrived at the gate of the nameless naval intelligence complex known to the rest of the men as "The Retreat." He flashed

his pass at the guard and marched through the door as if he owned the place. He could see that, even at night, the building never rested. Security was tight and the shimmering hospital-like hallways were cluttered with prim, buttoned-down, wristwatch watching officers. The entire building was the jewel of purity. Matrose was certain that he could even sit down and dine off the floor.

Following the instructions that he had been given, Matrose made his way through the maze of halls to a door that was marked SUPPLIES. He casually opened the door and stuck his head into the room. It was a janitor's closet and was crammed with mops, sani-flush, and NSPSGT toilet paper. Taking a quick sniff of the mothball scented air, he entered the room and turned to shut the door.

"Don't!" hissed a voice.

Matrose turned back around to see a fellow sailor lunge at him. He managed to stick his foot in the closing door just in time to stop it. Matrose recognized him as one of his bunkmates, Jim Wipple. They were both about to speak when a procession of footsteps passed the door. By peeking into the hallway, they could see two officers standing in front of the door. It was quite apparent that one of the duo wore a great degree more mirrored medals and uniform finery than the other.

"This issue is not about what is ethically right, Pulver! It's about getting the job done!"

"Sir, if we conduct this experiment, lives could be lost! Remember what happened with The Philadelphia Experiment?"

"There never was a Philadelphia Experiment!"

"Yes there was!" interrupted a bespectacled ensign as he passed by them.

"The Philadelphia Experiment never existed. You two can either believe that or be put on report!" wheezed the medal-garbed officer. "End of discussion!"

Seeing that the parade of officers had moved farther down the hallway, Matrose stuck a roll of toilet paper in the doorway. Wipple abruptly extracted the new doorstop and replaced it with his empty shoe. Wipple then took Matrose by the arm and led him to a heat vent on the other side of the room.

"What's the deal with the toilet paper?" whispered Matrose.

"It's Navy Special Polaris Submarine Grade Tissue!" smirked Wipple, squeezing it. "I'm smuggling it back to the ship."

"What are you doing in here?"

"Liberty — the same as you!" Wipple sniffed. "I've been stuck here for a week thanks to that self-locking door over there."

"A whole week?" asked Matrose incredulously. "Are you crazy or are you just plain loaded?"

"It was the only way to monitor the office. Anyway, a girl working across the hall found me. I told her I'd go out with her if she'd sneak me some food and let me out now and then," explained Wipple. "We have a date tonight."

"She has my sympathy," smirked Matrose. "Is this hole in the wall my way into the inner sanctum?"

"You stinking Yankees always expect a red carpet entrance," chided Wipple as he unscrewed the grate. He then pulled a can of spray paint out from behind a box of toilet paper and tossed it to Matrose. "This way the admiral won't expect anything funny when he comes back here. The only way he'll know he's been had is when he sits his overpaid duff on his private toilet and looks up at the message that you're going to spray on the door."

"What happens if I get caught?"

"You get spanked just like any of the admiral's other bad kids," replied Wipple, heading for the door.

"Any other instructions?"

"Don't look for me when you get out."

Matrose crawled into the plush office and surveyed the area. The only residents of the room were the leather backed chairs and the admiral's corporate-looking desk. Matrose took a quick glance at the awards that plastered the admiral's walls and then moved on. He marched over to a door in the far corner of the room that was marked with a gold plated PRIVATE sign. Chuckling at this, he punched the security code into the electronic panel by the door. The door swung open and revealed the admiral's shrine: his private bathroom.

Matrose shut the door behind him and took a peek behind the toilet tank. He found just what he had expected: a notebook filled with football plays for the Naval Academy's weekend game. He carefully detached the duct-taped notebook from the sweaty porcelain and flipped through the pages. He took off his wristwatch, which really contained a hidden camera, and began to click on the knobs on the side of the watch. He took pictures of a few of the plays and then put the notebook back. He then opened up the can of spray paint and left the admiral with the special message that had been promised: Killroy was here!

Seeing that the mission was completed, Matrose decided to sneak off and

finish his liberty elsewhere. As he crawled back through the vent, he found it impossible to suppress his bubbling satisfaction. The mission had gone just as he had expected: perfect. His spotless record remained spotless. That, he believed, was the way life should be. He smiled as he pulled Wipple's shoe from the door and walked into the hall. To his heart stopping shock, however, he was now standing face to face with the victimized admiral and the redhead from the bar.

"Look, daddy!" squealed the girl to the admiral. "That's the sailor I was telling you about, the one that looks like Tony Curtis and has liberty!"

Whether he liked it or not, Matrose had to admit that there was something to be said for family camaraderie. He bit his lip and moved his eyes past the scowling admiral to gaze upon a portrait of the flag that hung across the hall. He could not say much, though, for the double-sided District of Columbia and the town trade of preserving liberty. All he could do was wonder why his definition of liberty had left the dictionary and sold its entry to a more contradictory meaning.

Christine Dittmar
She Breaches

How many times have I done this. Sat here trying to think of a response. Her first question. It gets me every time—so how've you been. I've been whaling. Knows me well enough. She knows the recurring scenario. This lady in her mauve room with the stack of self helps. Will she approve? The response needs to be heartfelt but not too quick or more questions will ensue. Therapy can be a bitch. The first five minutes so awkward and long, the last ten resolute and short. How do I tell her?

It's a simple dream. My husband is driving. Both boys are in the back. In a convertible of all things. The top is down and the fresh warmth of spring is burning our necks. This road is familiar, one we traveled early on—before marriage, before kids. It skirts the north edge of the river hugging her waistline. We've already driven through Charleston. Lots of smokestacks and ticky tack houses. I start to count the washers and driers left on front porches. It's tradition. The river doesn't blend in well. It refuses to get lost in the shuffle. It waits. Trucks whiz by and their after effects are ruthless. A barge on its side lies beneath the third trestle with a belly full of coal jumping in for a swim. The boat lies quietly heaving. We point out fishermen waist deep in the shallows. Looks like one may be a woman. She is stroking the muddy water with her fly, ignoring the traffic. We're speeding by but no one seems to notice. The kids are laughing.

How can he not see it? I want to say something. Best not glance at the side view mirror. But how can I not? Trying not to make a scene. Act natural. Not so easy to do nowadays. Natural for me is not normal and normal is what goes. It's getting tougher to blend in. Keeping shoes on hides the toe rings. The tattoo just needs a sleeve for camouflage. If I don't complain about the nipple rings, no one will be the wiser. But this weight — it's a tale tell sign. A woman's weight bares her pain. It buffers.

That whale used to keep her mouth shut. Just comes up to surface now and then. Taking it all back with her down to the cold river bottom to settle — to help me avoid me. Damn! Look at her. How dare she dance in my peripherals. She's keeping up with the car now. Do I dare glance? The smell — I miss that smell. And her scars — her scars are the map. No need to show them, lady. Your mossy

back is aging. I know you well.

God no, she's breaching. The car is getting wet. My ankles are swimming in spray. I know this spray. I am this spray. Stop it. STOP!

No, speed up. We need to get to where we're going. Don't look back. Just take my word for it. My God, the kids see it, but you don't. How is that? You want to pull over and get gas. Is that what you want? The road...just stay on the road.

What to say—she's done answering messages. Here it comes. "So how've you been?" The brows furrow.

We slowed down for a light, guess he was thinking changing lanes would help. I got out of the car.

"I'm soaked."

Our eyes connect. "So, you dealt with the whale..."

Smiling.



Amanda Haverstick

Jenny Bucksbarg
The “Spectacular” Heroine of *The Matrix*

During the 1990s women reaped the benefits of feminism through an increase of career and educational opportunities. However, popular culture presented women as either career women obsessed with finding a relationship or outrageously athletic superheroes. Movies, novels, video games and television shows offered images of man-obsessed professional women or crime-busting animations. This social attitude created an ambiguity regarding feminism. Women were able to make many more choices as to the direction of their educations or careers, but at the same time opponents regarded feminism as negative because it prevented women from finding a relationship, thereby thwarting them from being natural women. These perceptions of feminism during the 90s were reflected in the popular culture. The 1999 film, *The Matrix*, mirrors the ambiguity of feminism during this decade and also perpetuates old myths concerning women.

In 1998, *Time* magazine explored feminism in the 90s in its cover story, “Feminism: it’s all about me!” Author Ginia Bellafonte claimed that popular culture offers “images of grown single women as frazzled, self-absorbed girls” (Bellafonte, 84). She suggests that the television character Ally McBeal and the protagonist of *Bridget Jones’s Diary* demonstrate that women are now able to have careers but are really focused on “relationships or appearance” (Bellafonte 84). The characters Ally McBeal and Bridget Jones supposedly have satisfying careers but continuously act like high school girls chasing boys. The popular culture perpetuates the myth that women with careers, but no relationship, are incomplete or even unnatural.

The late 90s also introduced the seemingly opposite end of the spectrum: the “girl power” movement. This was an emphasis on the athleticism and physical power of women. The cartoon industry released powerful female superheroes such as the “Power Puff Girls” or “Sailor Moon.” These were girls who fought crime while wearing skirts or pastel colors. Additionally, there was a plethora of virtual ass-kickin’ females in the video game industry. Perhaps the best known is Sony Playstation’s “Tomb Raider,” featuring Lara Croft. She is an athletic, strong, martial arts master who is interchangeable with *The Matrix’s*

female lead, Trinity. This superhero image of women came at a time when Nike and Reebok ran advertisements asking viewers to support women's sports. Reebok suggested that females should "Play like a man; win like a woman." It seemed that society had fully embraced women as competitive and active.

Trinity especially at the beginning of the film is agile, active and in control of her own survival. In the first scenes, a policeman calls Trinity a "little girl" (*The Matrix*). She proceeds to demonstrate that "one little girl" can kill a roomful of armed officers and must only retreat when faced with the omnipotent evil agents. However, even when confronted with these indestructible agents, she is able to escape using her own enhanced physical abilities and intellectual prowess. As she lies prone with twin guns poised for the pursuing agents she urges herself to "get up Trinity" (*The Matrix*). She is calling upon her own power to survive. Unlike Ally McBeal or Bridget Jones, she is not concerned with her appearance. Nevertheless, she is still searching for "the one" just as 90s popular culture claims that professional women are longing for a satisfying relationship.

This search is apparent from the opening dialog of the movie. We are set up to believe that Trinity is supposed to fall in love, even before we know that it is prophesied. Cipher, the informer, insinuates that Trinity already "likes" Neo. As the film progresses, it suggests that women are powerful, active, and independent people until they fall in love. The message is sent that Trinity is looking for her savior; she must find "the one." As popular culture proclaims, women are not fulfilled until they have a relationship. The 1997 book, *The Rules II*, explains that women in the 90s are able to "function without men, but they yearn for marriage and children and/or fulfilling relationships" (Fein and Schneider 7). The authors maintain that women can have careers and be "financially self-sufficient" but women will continue to lack something if they do not have a relationship (Fein and Schneider 7). It appears that the authors of *The Rules II*, *Ally McBeal*, and *Bridget Jones's Diary* all claim the same premise: women can have careers or an active life but will never be emotionally complete without a man. They will consciously (or unconsciously) be searching for "the one." This is the same search that Trinity enters into. It is prophesied that she will fall in love with "the one" who will be her savior. No matter that she is able to outwit the agents, no matter that she is second in command on the real world ship the Nebuchadnezzar: Trinity is still seeking her savior.

When women cannot find or keep this fulfilling relationship that popular

culture claims 90s women need for completion, feminism is blamed. In the introduction to her 1991 book *Backlash*, Susan Faludi describes feminism's condemnation: "Women are enslaved by their own liberation. They have grabbed at the gold ring of independence, only to miss the one ring that really matters...They have pursued their own professional dreams-and lost out on the greatest female adventure" (Faludi, x). The "greatest female adventure" is the search for a man, eventual marriage, and inevitably childbirth. In their focus on career and financial security, women supposedly have fooled themselves. They actually desire a traditional relationship.

In her 1999 article "The Antifeminist Seduction," Tara Zahra states that conservatives argue that feminism "has overreached, brainwashing women into defying their own deepest longings for a family and a home" (Zahra 84). Apparently, feminism blinds women to their natural instincts and then they miss out on the life that real women possess: man, marriage, and childbirth. *The Matrix* features a scene where natural birth is corrupted which mirrors the conservatives' insistence that feminism is contrary to the natural instincts of women. Professional women are unnatural just like the birth in the film.

The word "matrix" itself has feminine origins. According to the *Barnhart Dictionary of Etymology*, the Latin root is "mater" meaning mother or breeding animal. A definition of "matrix" is "womb." Another meaning is "that which gives origin or form to something enclosed within it." The Matrix in the film is a set of illusionary images that trick the brain while the physical body is held in stasis in a see-through, artificial womb complete with amniotic-like goo. Neo must be "born" into the real world. The birth sequence in the film is dark, menacing and mechanized. The film signals the "birth" of Neo when a shiny silver substance covers his body. We see Neo submerged in the fluid and we hear a muffled heartbeat reminiscent of the sound in the womb. The camera cuts to Neo's naked and completely hairless body emerging from the fluid. We see him coughing and gasping; he looks disoriented. His skull is connected to the Matrix by a large black umbilical cord. When Neo's physical body is unplugged from the Matrix, it is not an organic birth experience. Wires and black tubing surround him. Instead of being welcomed by his loving mother, Neo is harshly unplugged by an insectoid machine. Neo yells in terror as we see his naked body plunge down the menacing birth canal, not unlike a dark waterslide. The camera cuts to the sewer pipe-like end of the canal and we see Neo shoot out and plunge into a pool of water. He gasps and flails like any

newborn infant and the camera cuts to the bright lights of the rescuing ship. His "birth" into the real world reflects an actual birth with its fluids and sounds, but it is a twisted, dark delivery.

This unnatural birth mirrors the ideology that if a woman focuses only on her career and not on a relationship and/or family, she is not an authentic woman. When the ship recovers Neo, he asks, "Am I dead?" to which Morpheus responds, "Far from it" (*The Matrix*). This implies that Neo is now truly "alive"; his previous existence had been the illusion of life. In this same way, feminist women are not truly alive. By focusing on their careers, they are also living in an illusion. The 90s popular culture suggests that finding "the one" can break this illusion. Living only begins when a woman finds a fulfilling relationship.

After Trinity realizes that Neo is "the one" and falls in love with him, she does not appear inside the Matrix again. After she admits that he is "the one" and confesses her love, she is relegated to the real world as the passive watcher. Neo has usurped her place within the Matrix. Neo is now the one who survives by his wits and physical ability. Neo outruns the agents just as Trinity did in the beginning of the movie. The film echoes the first scenes but the roles of hero and heroine are inverted. Trinity is trapped in the real world and has been reduced to a cheerleader. She urges Neo to elude the agents and wipes his inert body's bloody lip.

Not only is *The Matrix* an action/science fiction film, but it is also a romance. Trinity waits to fall in love with Neo and when her love is confirmed she is reduced to passivity by being excluded from the action of the film. Romance is about delay. There is no point in continuing the story after the characters fall in love. Patricia Mellencamp quotes Ann Bar Snitow in her book *A Fine Romance: Five Ages of Film Feminism*: "Unlike work, which leads to development, advancement, romance depends on passivity; on not knowing...Once the heroine knows the hero loves her, the story is over. Nothing interesting remains" (250). Trinity certainly does not have further use in the film. She has fallen in love and that is the last that we see of her. We see Trinity at the beginning of the film as an active heroine, but the plot depends on her waiting to fall in love. She does not need to fight the agents to succeed; she merely needs to stay alive to fall in love with Neo, her savior. Trinity is presented for the female audience's identification, but what is it that women are identifying with? Supposedly she is an athletic, powerful role model, but this typical romantic plot

leaves her with no action after she falls in love.

During the final scene of the film, Neo claims that he is not there to bring about an end, but a beginning. Unfortunately, this beginning does not seem to include Trinity or their relationship. As the film demonstrates, as soon as we see Neo kissing Trinity in the real world, suggesting that he returns her love, her role in the movie is over. We do not see Trinity or hear any mention of Trinity after this scene. This implies that once the search for "the one" is complete there is no need for Trinity to remain active as she was in the beginning of the film. Neo takes over her previous place as leader in the Matrix. This perpetuates a myth that Simone De Beauvoir discusses in her 1952 book, *The Second Sex*. She explores the notion that men dominate the public sphere and women should be relegated to the domestic sphere. She quotes Balzac as an example of the perpetuation of this myth formed before even her time. Balzac asserts that "man's life is fame, woman's life is love. Woman is man's equal only when she makes her life a perpetual offering, as that of man is perpetual action" (De Beauvoir 669). When Trinity declares her love for Neo, she is then only able to observe Neo's action. She is no longer active; she can only support him through words and emotion.

During the 1990s women were portrayed by popular culture as either man-hunting, career women, like Ally McBeal or Bridget Jones, or virtual physically superior superheroes, like Trinity. Also insinuated was the idea that women were not happy with feminism because it supposedly prevented them from being authentic women. To be an authentic or complete woman would be not to deny those "natural" instincts that make 90s women yearn for "the one." As a product of this popular culture, *The Matrix* reflects these social attitudes and it also further perpetuates older myths regarding the roles of women. Yes, Trinity is "spectacular." She is part of the "girl power" movement, an athletic superhero. Trinity has awesome fighting ability in addition to her superior survival skills. But as the film progresses, Trinity's independent action is replaced by a watchful passivity. Her search for "the one" mirrors the popular culture's assumption that professional women are likewise seeking a relationship. However, once Trinity admits her love and believes that Neo is "the one" she is reduced to the role of supporter. At the beginning of the film she was "spectacular"; now she is reduced to "spectator." She can only observe as Neo battles the agents whereas at the beginning of the film it was Trinity who performed heroically. This perpetuates the old notion that men act and women serve. In

these ways, *The Matrix* reflects popular culture's perceptions about feminism and the role of women during the 1990s.

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Donald Dean

Internet Security and Censorship

Internet censoring: is it a must or just an outright unthinkable invasion? Many people are uneducated on the acts that can happen through the Web, so they don't believe in censoring. However, I believe that some sort of censoring on the Internet is a must. There are too many possibilities along with tempting ways that one may misuse the Internet. Yes, it is true that the Internet is a good source of information; however, too much information can lead to wrong things. Many different dangers can result from misuse of the Internet, which is why censoring should occur.

One of the most common dangers on the Internet is "hacking." Hacking pertains to illegally gaining access to another's computer system. Hacking can be harmless exploration or, if the information is found, can be used for harmful purposes. In 1999 a group of crack cyberspooks from the Russian Academy of Sciences targeted the computer systems of the Departments of Defense and Energy, military contractors, and leading civilian universities and stole vast amounts of data that included classified naval codes and information on missile guidance systems (Vistca 52). John Hamre, Deputy Secretary of Defense, stated to colleagues, "we're in the middle of a Cyberwar!" Also, Intelligence sources say that the perpetrators even gained "root level" access to some systems, a depth usually restricted to a few administrators (Vistca 52). A couple of questions that remain are how far did the Russians actually gain entry, and what were they looking for? In any case, whatever information that may have been accessed from classified military systems could be a potential threat to the American nation.

Another threat, not only to our nation but also to the entire world, is child solicitation and child pornography. Such abuse is a very sensitive subject. Many people, like me, find this topic filthy and disgusting. Then, again, others are obsessed and enthralled by this subject. The World Wide Web has allowed these people to commune with each other and practice their sickness. Yes, I believe it is a sickness, practiced by individuals in the privacy of their own homes. The Internet has allowed children of all ages to be lured into a secret web of mentally unstable minds. In 1996 Father Fortunado Di Noto, a priest at the Madonna Del Carmine, began an Internet learning course to teach children

how to use the World Wide Web. He believed the Internet to be a vital learning tool in today's high-tech age (Bartholet and Nordland 45). During one of his sessions, one of his students wanted to find information on "lollipops." Using the key word "slurpy," an Italian slang word for lollipop, Father Fortunado found something that appalled him. Not knowing that "slurpy" is also a slang word for a sex act, Fortunado found a very disturbing Web site. "An outfit called the Pedophile Liberation Front, which defends the lifestyles of pedophiles, people who are sexually attracted to children, popped up on the computer screen" (Bartholet and Nordland 45). Eventually Father Fortunado went on to find many child pornography and solicitation sites from all across the globe.

Recently, police found and took down a child pornography Web site in Palm Beach, Florida. They found that confederates of a notorious Belgian pedophile had sent explicit child pornography to the Palm Beach site. The take-down of this site led to the arrest of 1,700 Italians for actively purchasing child pornography (Bartholet and Nordland 47). "The total number of substantiated child pornography cases has declined by 31% between 1992 and 1998, from 149,800 to 103,600 cases per year" (Bartholet and Nordland 47). This is a dramatic change; however, there is still 69% that need to be taken care of. Child pornography and child solicitation lead to child molestation and child abuse, which in turn can lead to the death of a child. Censoring the Internet may not solve this problem entirely, but it is a good start and will reduce child abuse and sexual exploitation.

Other hidden dangers of the Internet are tiny computer data tags known as "cookies." Supposedly, throughout the summer of 2000, dot coms were caught snooping. A survey of 1,000 Internet surfers (below) shows that they are upset with this invasion of privacy. Ninety-four percent of the 1,000 surveyed wanted privacy violators to be punished (Hawkins 59).

How Web Surfers View Their Privacy

- 86% are concerned about the privacy of their personal information
- 45% have never provided their real E-mail addresses, names, or other data to a Web site
- 24% have provided fake names or personal data to a Web site
- 5% have used software that hides computer identities from Web sites
- 86% favor "opt-in" privacy policies
- 94% want privacy violators to be punished

Source: Pew Internet & American Life Project

Cookies also allow stalkers to take their stalking online. Cyber stalkers use the information they find from cookies to terrorize their innocent victims. Timothy McGillicuddy, principal of Hawthorne Brook Middle School in Townsend, Massachusetts, was a victim of a cyber stalker. "Twenty-year-old Christian Hunold allegedly stalked and tortured the entire town of Townsend from his home computer in Smithville, Missouri, directing kids to child pornography sites and placing "hit" lists on teachers and students on the Internet" (Locy 38). Hunold apparently frequented a chat room for the alternative rock group Limp Bizkit, using a screen name. "Kim Landi, 14, noticed Hunold boasting about raping teenage girls and was disgusted, but being a typical teenager she told all her friends" (Locy 38). Hunold used different aliases to gain information from the kids. Before long he knew everything about them, even what they were going to wear to Friday's football game. Reverend Kevin Patterson of the First Church of West Townsend says, "Not monitoring kids' use of the Internet is like dropping them off in the worst part of the city in the middle of a gang war and saying, 'I'll pick you up later!'" (Locy 38)

Cookies can also lead to other problems, such as identity theft. All one needs is your social security number, and someone can steal your identity, and the Internet is making it easier for the bad guys (Sandberg 56). Kenneth Morse's identity was stolen without him even knowing about it. "With just his name and social security someone hijacked Morse's credit-worthiness and was joy riding it for all it was worth" (Sandberg 56). "Morse was the victim of the worst kind of privacy violation—the theft of his identity. It is poised to be a common nightmare," says Jared Sandberg. All it takes is just your name, social security number, and occasionally an E-mail address and you can kiss your identity goodbye (Sandberg 57). In another instance of identity theft, one out of many, William Bergau, a thirty-five-year-old college recruiter, and his wife had been on vacation when his wallet was stolen from their car. Apparently the thief then used the Internet to purchase goods under Bergau's name. As a result Bergau's credit and good name were destroyed (Sandberg 57).

Many different types of theft may occur through the Internet. Credit card theft is included in this equation. In Beaver, Pennsylvania, John Vranesevich, a twenty-one-year-old founder of AntiOnline, an Internet security firm, receives a message from a "carder," someone who trades stolen credit card account numbers, using the pseudonym ELGOD who asks, "wanna trade USA ccdz? I got 5 Visas, 1 MC, 1 Virgin Visas" (Perry 40-42). "'Ccdz' means credit cards, 'MC'

means Master Card, and 'Virgin' refers to a stolen number that has yet to be used illegally." Another carder "Cool Guy" brags that he has a list of over 7,000 working numbers. Finally, a carder by the name of MaStEr_P announces that he has Virgin Visas to trade. All this happens on one Saturday morning. Using the handle, or screen name, h4cker, Vranesevich introduces himself. "Sup yo. You got cc to trade? I go an AmEx Gold." After MaStEr_P takes the bait and gives up all his information, Vranesevich locates the card's owner, Jeanine Bohan, and sends an E-mail stating that her card was stolen (Perry 42). The theft of credit cards is a serious crime. It can ruin a person's credit reputation. Something must be done to protect Internet users from such crime!

On September 12, 2000, an article in *The LaPorte Herald-Argus* stated, "Fed Web sites fail FTC privacy guide." Investigators say a huge majority of Federal Web sites fail to meet the Federal Trade Commission's standards for Internet privacy. "The General Accounting Office graded 65 of the government's favorite World Wide Web sites," with only 2 passing the privacy guidelines. That's roughly 3.2% ("Fed Web Sites" 7). Representative Dick Armey of Texas, who requested the report, said, government Web sites, with all kinds of personal information about the public, should be held to a higher standard than companies who glean commercial information when customers visit their sites. The government, on the other hand, requires the public to give information; we have no choice. You don't have to use a commercial Web site if you feel it has a bad privacy policy. Which worries you more?" Eighty-five Federal Web sites post mandatory privacy policies; however, only 69% satisfy the notice test ("Fed Web Sites" 7). In the May privacy report, the FTC reviewed popular commercial Web sites for their compliance with the four pillars of privacy, with only 42% of the most popular sites implementing them ("Fed Web Sites" 7). If the Federal government fails its own privacy guidelines, then other Web sites will not feel it necessary to follow them.

There needs to be some sort of security measures on the Internet. We need to be protected from cyber-predators! I feel that the government should be held to this responsibility. If not the government, then who? Who will take this responsibility? Scientists who are too busy trying to find an easier way to make butter from pig DNA? No, the government makes the laws we live by. So, they need to make laws about the Internet. Now there may already be laws for protection on the Internet, but apparently the laws are not working. There needs to be stricter penalties for electronic violators! Stricter penalties may lead to

fewer crimes. If not, at least it's a start. For those who don't believe there is a problem, ask yourselves a few questions. Have you ever been stalked or had your identity stolen online? Have your children ever fallen victim to a pedophile? And if any of the stories mentioned in this paper did happen to you, would you then feel that there is a problem? In conclusion, is the Internet safe? In many aspects, I truly believe not. A way must be found to censor the Internet. The Internet lets criminals have privacy while society does not. Without censoring who knows what crimes will be available to tomorrow's criminals. The possibilities are endless. This is why, beyond a shadow of a doubt, we must censor the Internet.

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Contributors

Susan Antoszewski, 31, homemaker and mother of three, is a first-time college student. After pursuing a degree in Behavioral Sciences from PNC, Susan plans on tackling a Criminal Justice Degree from Indiana University Northwest.

Heather Boklund is an education major at PNC. She is from LaPorte and has been drawing for fun for many years.

Kristi Brosmer graduated from PNC in May 2001. Currently, she is taking one graduate course at PNC per semester. In addition to attending PNC, Kristi is enrolled full time in the graduate program at Valparaiso University. Soon she will be taking a hiatus for a year or two to pursue other activities. Kristi would like to thank Dr. Susan Hillabold and Ms. Beth Rudnick for their assistance this year.

Jenny Bucksbarg is a 2002 graduate of PNC. She grew up in a large family of eight children in an old farmhouse with no close neighbors. Consequently, reading became a large form of entertainment. One of her fondest memories is going to the library with her father. She has attended three different colleges and it has taken her a decade to graduate (due to the birth of her daughter Maya) but finally she has the honor of receiving a B.A. in English. She plans on attending graduate school and someday receiving a Ph.D. This is the first writing contest that she has entered and she is thrilled to have won! She believes that reading is the easy part; it is the writing that requires the most effort.

Jeff Burton, a 40-year-old husband and father, is in his second semester working towards his Associate Degree in Business. He would like to give special thanks to his beautiful wife, Brenda, and his loving children (daughters Jamie, Jennifer, Jordan, and son Jeff Jr.) for encouraging him to continue his education.

Amos T. Cooley is a freshman in PNC's program at the Lakeside Correctional Facility. He plans on earning his Associate Degree in General Business,

with an emphasis in Accounting. Amos also plans on earning a Bachelor Degree in Accounting. After these short-term goals, he hopes to open up his own accounting firm.

Donald Dean is a 23-year-old sophomore who aspires towards a degree in computer technology while at Lakeside Correctional Facility. Ever since he was young, he has loved computers and computer related tools. His goal is to become the top-rated computer programmer in the country.

Christine Dittmar is pursuing a BLS degree to go along with her Associate in Technology. That makes for a non-traditional combination, but then she is a non-traditional student. At present, she is looking toward graduate school, hoping to teach at the college level someday. Another dream is to live on and own an orchard. Hopefully those pursuits will complement one another. Her time is spent attending classes and living on a lake with her husband and two sons. The essays here were the first she has written in 10 years.

Kelly Ganz is a pre-nursing student at PNC. She earlier graduated with a degree in elementary education and is the mother of three children. She has a great love and appreciation of the writing process and is working towards the completion of her first novel, *With These Hands*.

Rebecca Hall started at PNC in the fall 1999. She is a junior, majoring in General Business-Accounting. She plans on earning her associate and bachelor's.

Amanda Haverstick, a senior English major, is quite enveloped in the activities of being a full time student, a Writing Center tutor, and a sales associate at Reader's World. When she gets a chance to escape from her chains of duty, she enjoys web design, The Beatles, and wasting her hard-earned money on collectibles. She writes fiction as she breathes and hopes to some day use her talents in the publishing and editing fields.

Matt Henning, a 19-year-old from Valparaiso, is majoring in political science. Matt, a Republican, plans on one day becoming a Senator or Congressman. As a believer in Jesus, he sees some type of religious meaning in all work.

Shellie Higgins is an aspiring veterinarian following the pre-veterinary program at PNC. She attends school full-time and works as a Veterinary Technician while not studying. Shellie is passionate about parrots and would like to specialize in avian medicine. When she is not diligently working hard, she spends time with her family, consisting of husband John, son Nic, and their zoo of animals. Molly and Amber are the canine kids. Berk is the finicky feline. The most spoiled of the bunch, Merah, is an Eclectus parrot, who likes to play basketball and say "peekaboo!" Shellie's life is never dull! She also enjoys writing and is very excited to be published in *Portals* 2002.

Scott Linnell, a freshman, is a pre-chemistry major and is spending the summer training for the Reserves.

Karen Marks is a nontraditional student in the Liberal Studies program, majoring in Behavioral Sciences, and a proud member of the Alpha Sigma Lambda national honor society. Karen often ponders what she wants to be when she grows up. Currently, she is in pre-law, with hopes of entering Valparaiso University's Law program in two years. She started out taking just one class at a time as an experiment. She was curious whether she could hack college work after a 25-year hiatus. Now that she has attended full-time, she can see the light at the end of the tunnel (even if it is still 50+ credits away!). The picture that she submitted for this publication was drawn during a one-semester class taught by D. Huber here at PNC and was an amazing experience. She started the class drawing stick people (and not well!) and finished with a newly developed talent. Unfortunately, between her classes, her volunteer work with the Indiana State Wrestling Association, and her children, she does not have as much time as she would like to continue sketching. She is honored that the judging committee has accepted her drawing of her nephew, Mikey. Being chosen for *Portals* was a surprise to Karen and will now be an incentive for her to continue drawing. She may be inspired to enter another portrait next year.

Rosalind Miller considers herself blessed to have a God-given second chance at age 39 to attend college. Beginning with the Associate in Accounting program, thinking it was the quickest route to re-employment after her factory job was exported, she lost interest in some of the business courses and realized that if her college endeavor was to be successful, she would have to do it right.

Having changed her major to math in 2001, she now plans to transfer to West Lafayette in 2004 and graduate in 2006 with her bachelor's degree and with her oldest son. She can't think of a more enjoyable way to spend her time than to work at something she loves: math. She also enjoys Christian rock music but now that she has realized a newly found skill in art, she might just draw a few pictures along the way. She wants to thank those who selected her sketch for *Portals 2002*.

Shawn Pierce, currently a junior studying Business at PNC, has not had an easy road to follow. When he was about eight years old, he saw a pencil drawing that his father had made and wanted more than anything to be able to create as his father had done. He fell in love with art. However, he was not able to finish the third grade in a formal setting. In fact, he never really returned to school again. His life, shaped by others, led him to a dead-end. One day, he awoke and realized his own aspiration in life was to create art. Now studying Business and creating art, Shawn has improved his life. He would like to thank his Art teacher and friend, Mr. G. Szott for helping him understand the contrast in life as well as in art. He also wants to thank the entire faculty at PNC for just doing what they do best. Finally, he wants to thank his family, whom he loves very much.

Denis A. Rogers is a freshman at PNC's program at the Lakeside Correctional Facility. He plans on finishing his Associate Degree in General Business. After graduation, his next goal will be to earn a Bachelor Degree in Electronics. One day, he plans on opening his own business in the Elkhart area.

Phoenix Rzetelny is a first-year student at PNC, majoring in the Biological Sciences. She has a strong interest in both biology and medicine and she plans to pursue a career in the health field upon graduation. She would like to thank her mother for knowing so much about medicine and for contributing to her paper. Also, she would like to thank her father for working so hard and for giving her the opportunity to attend PNC.

Danielle Weinhold is a bridge student at PNC.

Dave White thinks biographical sketches of writers are of little value. If you really want to know who they are, read their stuff.

Kimberly Wiseman is a senior who will graduate in December 2002 with a BLS degree. She plans to work in the arts and pursue a degree in fine arts while continuing on with her writing. Kimberly wishes to extend heartfelt and sincere thanks to every instructor and fellow student who has helped her through her PNC career. Extra-special thanks go out to Dr. Vernon Loggins for his unequivocal support and generosity.

